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HERDER'S LETTERS RELATING TO THE STUDY OF DIVINITY.

[Translated from the German.]

LETTER II.

The Hebrew is to be spoken of and used, as the language of a peculiar time and people. The merit of Schultens. We must not judge the poetry of the Bible, by the present standard of taste. An examination of the history of Paradise, of the first transgression, and of the story of Balaam.

THAT the Hebrew language was spoken by men,—that is, by a nation,—has been fully demonstrated: but that it was spoken by Gods, by Angels, and Elohim, cannot be proved. I stand therefore by the first.

And here it does not concern me, whether Adam, Seth, Noah, or Abraham at Ur in Chaldæa, spoke Hebrew; enough that their posterity spoke it, Moses wrote it, and the oldest writings of the Old Testament, and nearly its whole contents, are preserved in this once living, human dialect. Now what is more natural, than that men should use it as a living national language? and when it ceased to be so, that they should have recourse to the languages, which represent it most to the life? You will not therefore fail to study with diligence the Arabic, and the kindred dialects:—Not, indeed, to gather roots which you may force into the Hebrew; nor to make easy passages difficult, and natural things unnatural, by dint of Arabic conjugation; nor, above all, to beg beauties of stone out of Arabia, to kill living beauties with. Let it be your chief object to make yourself master of the ge-

nus of the language ; to feel the expression and imagery of the East ; and to hear in its living tones, at least from a distance, the old and simple Hebrew, by the help of its younger and more artificial dialects.

It can hardly be expressed, how much good has been effected by the plain consideration—it is a living, human, national tongue, that we are learning. Schultens overturned the prejudice, that the Hebrew language was the language of heaven ; and recommended her younger sister or daughter upon the earth. Since then, the study of that, for the illustration of the bible, has received an entirely new impulse. Endeavour to have always at hand, for reference, his works ; particularly his “*Origines Hebrææ*.” Their Latin style is like that of a learned Arabian, too fine, too artificial ; and they abound too much with unimportant disquisitions connected with etymology ; yet the spirit of his writings is full of the knowledge and philosophy of the oriental languages. This author has tasted the kernel, and not kept gnawing upon the shell ; while we in Germany often get nothing from his disparagers or followers, but shells polished a little. Observe it as a general rule in every art and science, to pay chief attention to him who first led the way in it,—to the source : now for the most part he rises as the fountain, and the rest are but babbling brooks. Notwithstanding his unlucky assiduity here and there, which it is hard to follow him through with, he is a gold mine to any body, who is willing to dig for the general history of the earliest languages.

Enough that we read the Old Testament in the ancient, simple, pastoral, unphilosophical, *unabstract* language of the Hebrews. From this point of view, which bears closely upon the spirit of what it contains, let none divert you. If you would enjoy these writings in their original air, you must become a shepherd with shepherds, a peasant with an agricultural people, an oriental with the primitive inhabitants of the East. Be particularly on your guard against the dull abstractions of modern monkery ; and still more against those pretended beauties, which would be obtruded and forced upon these sacred specimens of the highest antiquity, from our own state of society. Of that taste for abstractions I shall speak by and by. At present we live in the especial age of elegance and flowers, with which even Moses, David and Solomon must be bestrown, in spite of all their protestations. This psalm is an ode, that an elegy after the newest fashion : Moses and the prophets become epic bards ; and the subject is often treated, as if these holy men had composed their pieces according to the elements of Batteux, or in the form of an anthology. A withered florilegium from the Greeks and Ro-

mans is scattered over them ; and the author, when he has moreover prattled sufficiently of various readings and versions, is sure of the paper crown of gazette commendation. I am no enemy of fine passages and parallel beauties, whenever and however they are found : but a noble original, especially one whose simplicity and important truth are its best ornaments, loses more than it gains, when attempted to be illustrated by the painted, and often irrelevant copies, of later times and artificial manners ; and in this way there is an end at once (the subject of divinity out of the question) of the most beautiful originalities of the Bible. David and Job little thought that they must be made the colleagues of Horace and Æschylus, in order to be proved the first to see and feel what those poets described. I doubt, however, if they, who cannot be interested in them for their own sake, will be moved by all the tinsel and electric flashes, with which they can be made to sparkle. Lowth "*de sacra poësi Hebræorum*" has done much towards extending this poetic air :* but he must certainly be acquitted from any participation in the latest abuses on this subject, by which things the most substantial and nutritive have come to be dissolved into mere fragrant vapour. He gave Prælections after the English fashion ; and, wishing to take up his subject *ab ovo*, treated it after the manner of Greece and Rome. He chose Greek and Roman names, and was fond of the method of the modern poetics, though not always adapted to his antique, oriental, sacred originals. Hence the questions and points often so impertinent,—whether the book of Job is a real drama ? whether the song of Solomon is a true Theocritean pastoral ? and to what class of odes or songs this psalm or that prophecy belongs ? They have absolutely nothing to do with any of these classes and distinctions : not only because none of those classes and distinctions were at that time in existence ; but because no one of the biblical writers, in the sense of the Greeks and Romans at least, set up for a poet. Their poetry was not art, but nature ; the spontaneous flow of expression ; the earnestness of intention, of strong impulse. Every one of their finest strokes

* Lest any of our readers should fear that Herder does not think respectfully enough of so distinguished a critic as Lowth ; and that they may not have to wait till the third letter comes to relieve them of such an error ; we translate the first sentence of his remarks preliminary to his celebrated work "*on the spirit of the Hebrew poetry*."—"Every body is acquainted with Bishop Lowth's beautiful and inestimable book *de sacra poësi Hebræorum* : it will be readily seen, however, on recurring to that work, that this is neither a translation, nor an imitation of it ;—and to be with him or behind him could not prove unpleasant or unprofitable to the lovers of the oldest, simplest, and loftiest poetry ; nor to any who love to trace the march of divine and human knowledge among our race."

is individual ; and by such a classification, made in other times. by other people, must lose more than it can possibly gain :—the living image that it presents, is darkened behind a cloud of arbitrary taste.

Let us now pass to examples ; for these always give the most definite instructions. The history of Paradise and the first transgression, for instance, can be nothing but an allegorical song, a moral fable. The garden, the tree of knowledge, the serpent, had no real existence : they were only used as the means of conveying to mankind, under the veil of a fable, a beautiful lesson ;—how sin arises, and how it is punished by God ;—and, naturally enough, the veil too was made beautiful. Thus a man gives to the text, considered as a matter of taste and poetry, what he takes away from it, and from the account connected with it, as an historical narrative.*—Now I ask you, my young friend, if to your uncrazed youthful judgment, on the first impression, any such song, any such beautifully designed and beautifully finished fable, appears in this simple narration. I read, and read again : no tone of song comes to my ears ; no more than in the whole history of the Israelites or the patriarchs ; where indeed in the song of Lamech, the songs of Moses, of David, of the prophets, the language rises at once into so different a strain, that no one who has the least sensibility to poetry and song can mistake that higher sound. Where is it to be found here, in the beginning of the Bible ? where does the song begin ? where does it end ? where begins the fable ; and where does it end ? If there is no paradise, no tree, no serpent ; if these are but the creatures of fable ; why not then sin too ? why not Adam and Eve ? But upon these last, as historical personages, there is much depending as we go on ; and in the sequel many consequences are ascribed to the transgression, and the banishment from this original dwelling place. Is it a fable, then, that Adam was created ? that he was created thus, and there, and for such a purpose ? that under such circumstances he was the father of the human race ? We know then nothing of all these things ; and we have nothing, in the whole account, but the old story of Prometheus and Pandora. Of course, all that is connected with this fiction is fiction too : and besides, the histories of Cain and Abel, of the flood, of the march of the Israelites out of Egypt, and through the wilderness, have interspersed with them such bold and poetical passages and descriptions, as can find no place in a tale told with such infant

* Our readers may, if they please, compare the literal account, which our author proceeds to defend, with " A glance at the history of opinions concerning the fall of man," published in the *Disciple*, New Series, vol. I. p. 170.

simplicity as this. In short, if all is a poem, a fable, a fiction, which has come to us from the infancy of the world, and come to us in its own appropriate tones, which must be simple, juvenile, poetical ;—for all historians admit, and the nature of things demands, that every composition must wear the natural colouring of the circumstances that produced it ;—what will be left to us of all this most ancient of histories ?

On the contrary, my friend, if you will take the history just as it is, not concerning yourself with any of the late ingenious interpretations or inventions, how natural and philosophical—and by that I mean, how agreeable to the subject, the language, the time, the circumstances,—does every thing become !* A human pair is formed ; for God does every thing with the least expenditure of power. A third man, or a second pair, would have been lavishness ; and we should all dwell on the earth as brethren of one family. Adam and Eve are thus historical persons ; and their creation, their mutual offices, the union of their earliest perceptions and feelings, could not be told more simply, truly, intelligibly, faithfully to fact, for the uncultivated listeners of ancient times, than they are told here.† Paradise comes naturally in : for must not this first human pair, which trod the earth under the immediate education of divinity, have a select, secure place assigned to them, fitted and furnished to be the first school of their knowledge and duties ? There is philosophy here : for all this was required according to the simplest plan of an élève of nature. Household could not derive its origin from agriculture : it must have begun in a garden, or it could not have begun at all. In an inhospitable climate, or under the teeth of wild beasts, could not unprotected man have been cast forth ; nor exposed a prey to all the elements ; for he would soon have perished. The creator of the earth now adopted man as his child and favourite. It was his pleasure that he should bear his image, and appear as his representative, by being endowed with understanding and speech, and invested with dominion over the animal creation. From the first moment of his life, therefore, he must cul-

* A whole dialogue in the first volume of the “ Spirit of the Hebrew poetry,” is devoted to the Mosaic account of Paradise ; in which the writer endeavours more at length to distinguish what is historical, and to explain what is figurative in it. We think, however, that he is at least as successful here ; and our readers will probably think that here is quite enough of it. An imperfect and very bald translation of the first volume of that work was published at London in 1801, under the title of “ Oriental Dialogues.”

† “ O that this were a fable !” cries Alciphron, in the dialogue mentioned in the last note, “ it would be beautiful as a fable.” “ In point of dexterity,” replies Eugenius, “ always regard it as such : but it was a fable that was really acted.”

tivate these precious and expansive gifts ; cultivate them in the lightest and at the same time the most urgent manner :—see then how exact and natural is the whole history. God selects animals for his companions, who do not harm him, who become familiar with him, from whom he derives instruction, who by their instincts, their characteristic qualities, their noises and motions, gradually improve his reason, skill, and speech. He selects trees for his use, which are not hurtful, but refresh and nourish him ; among which he finds the plainest labour, and the sweetest relaxation and reward. He furnishes him with a spouse, who opens his heart, and discloses to him a new world of mutual joys, and inspires a love, which,—as he had observed in the lower animals, and now experienced in himself,—transcends far every other love. At length God lays upon him the most infantile injunction that could possibly be ;—that he should not meddle with a beautiful tree that grew in the midst of the garden, but choose rather another, which he recommended ; a better and more salutary, but probably a less inviting one : he pronounces threatenings which Adam, perhaps, understood as little, as children understand threatenings that have never been inflicted : his obedience, his self-denial, the power of the invisible in his soul over the most seductive appearances of any forbidden thing which the earth could produce, was to be put to the proof, or, which is the same thing, called into exercise ; and this was absolutely necessary for the physical and moral trial and security of the human race. Every thing cannot be permitted to a frail yet moral being : to a child every thing is not permitted. The power over ourselves to resist an enticing evil is the foundation of all human virtue,—which he certainly had occasion for in the more complicated circumstances of life ;—and from the restraining of the senses, according to the commandment of the Father, begins the whole religion of love, gratitude, and reverence. I am utterly unable to imagine any test, which could have been so natural, so adapted to the infancy of man, as this. It was the very nature of things : for could the man, following the impulse of appetite and will, eat of poisonous fruits, and still live ? and who should tell him this ? who could so earnestly and forcibly tell it as his paternal instructor ? A child, too, will always best become wise through the experience of evil ; and the mother lets her darling fall on a soft place to teach it in the best manner what it is to fall : even so did the kind mother of mankind, and arranged with such a view every circumstance. A serpent was to be the tempter, who was probably seen eating of the fruit, and first suggested to the woman the great probability that she too might taste of it, without immediately incurring the penalty of death. As the first pair learned every thing by ob-

serving the animals, why should they not likewise have learned and imitated this? The serpent, thought they, is so wise above all the beasts of the field; and may he not be so here? very likely it derives from this plant its wisdom, as we from all the other trees derive life, health and vigour. It was therefore that the Creator called it by so wonderful a name: tree of Knowledge. Of Knowledge; and forbid it to us? Might it not be that He reserved it for himself? Might he not eat of it unseen, and thus possess the wisdom of the gods? Was it from jealousy that He forbade it? The wise serpent eats, and is well. It allures, it seduces them: down dropped the fair fruit of enchantment before their longing eyes: the woman ate, the man ate, and the consequence was what might be expected. We know not what kind of fruit this was: the effect of it is described once and again so historically, that we may suppose it produced by some unknown fruit of a distant clime. It awakens passions within them; they see that they are naked: the unusual, unpleasant emotion reminds them of the divine prohibition: they stand there ashamed, they know not whither to turn, they make themselves such slight garments as they are able. The father comes, his voice is heard,—perhaps, as usual at the close of the day, to receive the account of their occupations, and by that means instruct them: *—but they do not now advance to meet him; they fly, they hide themselves, they answer to their call, they exculpate themselves like ingenuous children who have not yet learned to lie. The father (whose paternal examination nothing can exceed in beautiful fidelity of description) performs what remained to be performed, and with reference to which he had permitted this early fall. He makes their transgression the entrance to another stage of condition, more hard indeed, but necessary: their punishment is not death, as to alarm them he had threatened; but a new, though a harsh benefit.† He at once indulgently ad-

* We leave it to who chooses, to reconcile this with what is said in the dialogue: "They heard the voice of Jehovah, who was walking in the garden in the cool of the day:—nothing is more probable than that this was thunder; and that through this very expression the image was introduced into the Hebrew poetry."

† "It was necessary," Herder writes in another place, "that the first man should have the door of his cottage opened; and it was to be opened by his own error."—Herder opposes with warmth the idea, that man was not originally made for the state in which he is at present placed: he calls it a hateful and contemptible philosophy, which puts out men's eyes that they may not see themselves." "Adam," he goes on, "sinned first; and we are all sinners as he was; and must die as he did: as Eve was deceived, so are we deceived and estranged from our simplicity;—this is what the scripture says, but it does not say that we are made differently from Adam in our bodily frame: it does not say that when he sinned his nature was ruined, or that he and his posterity through him were subjected to numberless perversions of understanding and will."

mits all that they say ; considers the serpent as the tempter, according to their representation ;—punishes it too, that nothing may seem to escape from retribution. It is detested and abhorred by all the beasts of the field ; creeps upon its belly ; eats the dust ; a sworn foe of mankind, whose heel it bites at, since it can do them no further harm : it thus becomes a perpetual sign to our race, of malediction, scorn, abhorrence, wretchedness, treachery and mischief ; and in very shape an ugly reptile, made to be crushed under foot. As such it crept now before the eyes of the man and woman : for they had been on their guard against it before the transgression, and this most noxious creature to the primæval dwellings of man was shown even bodily to be a crafty enemy, whom they should fly from. The woman now knew to whom to ascribe the pangs of childbirth, and the heaviest yoke upon womanhood—subjection : the man knew to whom he was indebted for the toilsome task of tilling the ground, and for the increased troubles of life. Then death is introduced so beautifully ; not as death, of which Adam could as yet have no idea, but as becoming earth again, out of which (still historical) he had been taken ; a returning to his original ; a going to rest after a hot day. The man is thus acquainted with the whole circle of his new life ; and is armed for it by kind necessity, as for a softened punishment, which his own fault had incurred. The gracious Father prepares him for it still further ; and fits him out, if I may say so, by furnishing the very necessary contrivance of garments more convenient than his fig-leaves. He thus, now that the serpent is his enemy, and death is in the world, acquires at once over the brutes, a power and dexterity, which were as necessary to his new abode and occupation as to his clothing, which must be made of their skins. He leaves, actually and historically, his beloved garden, the first nursery of his young attainments, duties, and dispositions. It was already to them a lovely dream of youth : and look ! the cherub is watching before its gate with a flaming sword, to guard the way to the tree of life ; the loss of which was their greatest and most mournful loss ;—a loss, of which every malady of their offspring, every debility of their own, often enough reminded them. They saw Paradise now in the distance ; probably behind a hill, on which thunder clouds were resting : there is no way of return ; in every flash it is the flame of the heavenly guard that is darting there.

How natural every thing ; how true, how striking ! And tell me, my friend, does it not all depend on this,—that at every stroke we should carry in our minds the idea of a childhood's history of the human race ? Every thing there cries, truth ! truth ! The human race was and must have been so brought up, so tried, so

led forward : it was only thus that it could advance on its rude way by the most natural and instructive means. A master description is this of its education, in the first intricate steps of it ; and a masterpiece of narration, in the appropriate colouring of circumstance and time, is this narration. Stroke by stroke it can be compared with the history of nations, of men, in their infancy ; and as individual nations and men have begun in their formation, so also did the human race begin. Situation and dwelling place, the first language and means of sustenance, intercourse, the learning from the brutes, the fancied conversation with them, sin and shame, the prohibition and the punishment, and all that is connected with these, and goes along with them,—are the most delightful juvenile tale, of the first and most difficult developing of our race :—it precedes the patriarchal history, entirely in the same tone, and in the full colouring of its peculiar model, and with the truest moral painting of the characters that appear in it. As a cunningly devised apologue, the thing loses all its point and scope ; it has neither object nor appropriateness more.—It was hardly written for us of the eighteenth century. We must take the pains to go back to its connexion, to the childhood of our race ; and not expect these to come naturally to us.

My first example has been unreasonably long : but I cannot, for all that, refrain from giving you a second ; which shall be no other than the history of Balaam and his Ass.* In the midst of mere history it stands ; that is without dispute : but people have been so ashamed of it as history, that they have been inclined to make of it sometimes a dream ; and sometimes a fable in the taste of Homer's speaking horses ; and even (and I name the author of this opinion with the highest respect in every thing else)†

* Numbers xxii. 22-35.

† The author refers to Jerusalem. ("venerabilis senex," as Schultz styles him,) who first defended this theory, and has been followed in it by Rosenmüller, Doederlein, and many others. His supposition, stated more at large, is this : that Balaam was cunning enough to see that Moab would be worsted in opposing Israel ; and that, therefore, to save his credit, he pretended to hold these communications with God :—Moses took the account from Moabitish memoirs as he found it. Dr. Geddes, no more than Herder, can see how this hypothesis solves all difficulties. "To me," he says, "there appears nothing strange in the story of the ass, but the manner of telling it ; and that ceases to be wonderful, when we remember the eastern mode of narrating. Balaam is riding on his ass, on as yet a doubtful errand ; the ass startles at something and turns aside from the way ; thrusts her master's leg against a wall, and at length falls down under him. All this he takes for a bad omen, and a sign that his journey is not agreeable to God : God is thence conceived to be angry with him, and an imaginary dialogue ensues between God and Balaam, as had before been supposed to be held between Balaam and his ass. I believe there are few gentlemen who have not held such dialogues with their horses." Vater (a short account of

a lie of Balaam's, which Moses found among the Moabites, and inserted as such into his narrative. Read, my friend, the history in its connexion, and decide whether either of these hypotheses, evidently of modern origin, and savouring of modern taste, can satisfy you. Of a dream here is not a syllable; the fable of the horses of Achilles who spoke, is nothing to the purpose; for here is no heroic poem, as with Homer; and we are not prepared for any thing of the kind. Still less did Moses introduce the account as a piece of imposture: for every thing sounds as true in the tone of the account, as in the history of the departure out of Egypt, or in the description of the mount of wonders. In fact Moses recounts it for the glory of Israel, and for the confirmation of its courage and its trust in Jehovah. Even a prophet, who was the hireling of its enemies, must, through an invincible divine impulse, pronounce a blessing, against his interest and against his will:—more than once, in the presence of the king, at the hazard of his life,—to say nothing of the loss of honours and treasures—pronounce a blessing, and praise the God Jehovah:—evidently this is the spirit of history, and here is the reason why it was related. You are well aware, my friend, how much account the ancient world made of blessing and cursing, of divination, with prophetic feelings, words and signs; and how much is still made of them among uncultivated nations. None of our kings would send for a Balaam; but that Balak sent, that he besought him so respectfully, and with more and more earnestness for his curse, that he had so much confidence in his appalling blessing, and yet did not put forth his hand against him, shows satisfactorily in what reverence the prophet and his work were held among the Moabites. Moses forbade his people magic and incantation; but he forbade it not as cold, bald imposture, but as the service of strange gods; as an application of forbidden and evil powers, over which Jehovah had supremacy, and by which he was profaned. Exactly in this point of view does he relate this account. Balaam is invited to curse; but the God of Israel prevents his curses by a stern

whose celebrated work may be found in the *Monthly Anthology*, vol. 9. p. 56, copies thus much of the Doctor's note into his "*Commentary on the Pentateuch*," and observes of it:—it does not follow that the old eastern writer conceived of the matter so, nor that nothing else was at the bottom of the account; especially when the connecting circumstances, which must be resolved into metaphorical liberties, are so many, and so plainly told.—He himself thinks it very probable, that even in Israelitish antiquity different ideas prevailed of the tradition about Balaam; and that there are traces of such a difference in the book of Numbers itself. But how this tradition arose, on what facts it grounded itself, and how it assumed its present form, he contends that we can only conjecture.

nightly forbiddance. The soothsayer, seized with the fear of God, refuses to go. More noble messengers and more splendid presents arrive, to prevail on him to consent : his heart is all readiness,—but the prohibition still lies upon him, and he declares that he can do nothing to break that bond. Jehovah sees his covetous wishes, and requires of him to make it appear before the king and the people of Moab, that no word of cursing could fall from the lips even of the most avaricious of hired prophets, contrary to the command of God : thus he permits the journey, and they depart. The heart of the prophet now began to change ; for it was not certainly to bring Balak a curse that he had set out, and his journey was inconsistent and dangerous if he could really think of such a thing : he thought, therefore, to elude and baffle the divine command, and take occasion to fulfil the expectation of Balak by throwing out some evil expression, to which the people of that day ascribed great efficacy. Then God was angry with him as he rode ; his angel met him in the way, to warn him, who disregarded the divine voice in dreams, still more sternly. The dumb, serviceable beast sees the vision, and refuses to go on : this alone,—according to the vulgar sentiment of the time, and especially after what had happened, and to the mind of a diviner,—must have seemed an unlucky omen ; the kingdom of the spirit, was against him, the God Jehovah, who in two dreams had appeared to him. He disregards the omen, beats the animal, and urges her further. The vision leads on to a narrower path, and he is pressed to the wall ; but he regards it not, and beats and urges again. Now comes he to a close place, where there is no outlet : the messenger of the Lord appears in its most formidable aspect ; the ass drops down : he is enraged, he storms, and now—she speaks. She actually does speak in the impostor's ears ; for this is told in the same tone, in which all the rest is told : in the same manner, in which it is afterwards said that God opened the eyes Balaam, it is said here that he opened the mouth of the ass.* The eyes of the prophet in his wild and angry mood were not yet lifted up, as is plainly signified ; and Jehovah there opens his eyes. He sees the messenger of God with the fearful drawn sword, who reproves him, who speaks of

* In the second volume of the " Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry," Herder speaks thus of the same *history* :—" a fearful phenomenon is to befall him in the way : he actually hears and sees in a waking vision what is here related. How trifling, therefore, are the questions, whether the ass really spoke, and how she spoke, and in what way reason and speech were given her ! She spoke to the false prophet in vision ; that is, he heard a voice, and saw an appearance."—We do not know whether our readers will regard this as a very clear description.

slaying him, who pronounces his way perverse,—that is, treacherous, false, audacious,—and once more bids him in the most awful manner say nothing, but what the immediate divine impulse (*ορμη, εκστασις*, impetus *Jehovæ*) would have him say. Thus warned he proceeds, and in spite of his covetousness can do no otherwise. All his altars, all his offerings on the high places, are of no avail: no god of the hills here helps him: Jehovah meets him, and he cannot curse, he must bless. Twice he does it unwillingly; but the third time, as he feels the divine influence, he readily yields to it, and even adds a fourth blessing, higher than all the rest,—he blesses even to the latest times. No one, who has read what he uttered, can mistake the sublimest enthusiasm, the highest and as if immediate inspiration, of which human language is capable; and it resounds and springs upward from the unwilling lips of one, who was bought, and bought anew, to curse, when he blessed. It resounds from the lips of a man, who would deceive God, whose design was perverse when he came thither, who forgot the visions of the night, and gave no heed to all the portents of the way. A double vision of wonders was necessary to terrify him: and this vision was, as it were, his own history. As God opened the mouth of the dumb beast, so must *he* too speak against his will and his welfare; as if the angel with the naked sword at the narrow part of the way was standing continually before him. Whoever will carry himself back into the belief of those remote ages, and especially as it existed in the mind of one of the oriental diviners, who were always full of dreams, full of visions, full of wanderings in other places and times,—and are so still among all the nations where they are found;—whoever will do this, will find every thing so in its proper place, and the whole history in such natural order, the dealing of God so adapted to Balaam's manner of thinking, and even the speech of the animal in the ear of the soothsayer so agreeable to the object of his oracular journey, that I should know how to alter no word in this whole relation, even on the score of natural expression, any more than I should in the noble oracles of Balaam's mouth. It was as the proudest garland of the Israelitish confidence of victory, that Moses inserted it;—a garland, which an idolater and a knavish prophet for hire, under the immediate compulsion of Jehovah, even like a speaking brute, was obliged to offer. Can you conceive of a manner, in which Israel could be more beautifully or emphatically blessed? If you reduce the thing, however, to a fable, or a tale of imposture, I grant that this complexion of it will be better suited to the spirit of our times, and may satisfy it pretty well: but the history is broken. Moses' aim and scope are

destroyed; and the most resistless inspiration is become a poor trick; against the genius of the age, the popular belief, and the very words of Moses himself.—I should never have done, were I to attempt to go through with all the false colours, which have been laid on the good old Hebrews, borrowed from modern times, and especially from the poets: indeed my letter has grown into an essay already.

ON THE USE OF THE WORD "MYSTERY."

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

To use words in a wrong meaning, or without any meaning, is an old offence. It is a cause of great complaint, that language, which is designed to be the vehicle of ideas, should in so many cases degenerate into mere sound, or become the instrument of deception. This is, perhaps, peculiarly true of certain words and phrases derived from scripture, especially such words and expressions, as have been particularly connected with theological systems, or have become, in any degree, technical. Every one knows in how vague a manner, and how much at random, scripture terms are quoted and applied; and perhaps the language of the Bible, from the very nature of the book, is more liable to this abuse, than any other language. There is no book which requires so much explanation to make its true sense understood in many places, and which at the same time is so much in common use. Hence arises, in a considerable degree, that indefinite and obscure use of scripture phraseology, which is so general. Almost every one reads the bible; but few are possessed of the means of understanding its various parts, and fewer still will apply the means with impartiality and a desire to find the truth. The consequence is, that many words and phrases from the sacred writings are used in a very unmeaning or very incorrect manner. Besides, we are very apt to be pleased with being able merely to quote the bible, and to think it no mean proof of our proficiency in religion, that we can on every occasion promptly repeat some passage of scripture. To most minds there is something so satisfying in the mere use of scripture language, that it is a matter of little consequence, whether any definite ideas are attached to it, or not; hence, words come to take the place of things, and hence we so often hear or find not only grossly incorrect, but sometimes even ludicrous, applications of verses and sentences from the sacred writings.

Perhaps there is no word, of which the use is more frequently indefinite or incorrect, than the word "*mystery*." It is often made to hide the want of meaning, or to shield from examination ideas which are totally inconsistent with each other. It serves to put an end to discussion, when men have nothing else to say, and when nothing else can be said. It is a convenient resort alike for those, who do not think clearly, and for those, who are unwilling to relinquish their opinions to the force of any objection. Whatever things are unintelligible, absurd, or contradictory, may, by the aid of this single word, be secured from inquiry, and be converted into essential articles of christian faith. If, for instance, we ask, how God can be strictly and properly one being, and yet consist of three persons, "the same in substance, equal in power and glory," each infinite, and each possessing supreme divinity,—the answer is ready,—it is a *mystery*. If we ask, how one of these persons, Jesus Christ, could be at once "God and man in two distinct natures, and one person forever," could at one and the same moment know all things, and not know all things,—be suffering on the cross, and reigning in heaven,—the only reply is, that it is a *mystery*.—We are told, that this being, who was both God and man, suffered to make an atonement for sin, and that this infinite expiation was rendered necessary by the infinite evil of sin:—if then we enquire, how God could both offer up the sacrifice and receive it, how the divine nature could suffer, and how, if it did not, the death of Christ could be an infinite atonement, or any thing else than the death of a man,—our questions are easily met by saying that the whole is a *mystery*.—If we are confounded at the doctrine of man's inability to do the will of God, at the same time that he is required to do it, and venture to ask, how that Being, who is represented as invested with the attribute of justice and with the true character of a father, could bring mankind into the world "under his wrath and curse," and then condemn them to endless misery for not doing that, which He had rendered it impossible for them to do,—the same answer is still at hand,—it is the *mysterious* dealing of God with his creatures.—To the reflecting mind it may seem a most revolting inconsistency, to suppose that God, who "is no respecter of persons," who "is good unto all and whose tender mercies are over all his works," should "out of his mere good pleasure from all eternity elect some to everlasting life," and send the rest to irrecoverable ruin and eternal punishment;—but to silence all objections and quell every feeling of moral sensibility, we are taught that this is too *mysterious* for man to understand, and that God hath a right to do what he will with his own.—In short, it would be an almost

endless task to follow the various abuses of this word on religious subjects. To many it brings with it the recommendation of silencing the inquiries of reason, and humbling the pride of the depraved heart; and with many doubtless it is the sincere expression of heartfelt reverence and pious awe. Those, who quote the language of scripture in the loose and indistinct manner mentioned above, will probably feel satisfied with using the term in their own way, merely because they find it in the bible; and not attending to the sense, in which it is used in different places of the sacred writings, will claim for their own application of it the sanction of divine authority. It may be profitable, therefore, briefly to remark upon all the passages, in which the word *mystery* occurs in the New Testament,—that we may see whether we can there find any authority for those uses of it, which are so common and so incorrect.

Matth. xiii. 11.—“Because it is given unto you to know the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven.” This was said by Christ, immediately after he had delivered the parable of the sower, in reply to the question, “why speakest thou unto them in parables?” The “*mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*,” in this place, are evidently not any incomprehensible doctrines of religion, but those obscure and figurative expressions, which Christ had just used, respecting the nature of his kingdom and the reception and fate of christianity.—These our Lord tells his disciples they were in a condition to understand, while to others they would appear dark and unintelligible. The same explanation must of course be applied to Mark iv, 11, and Luke viii, 10.

Romans xi, 25.—“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this *mystery*,” &c. Here the word “*mystery*” has a meaning, which it often bears, viz. *something which had not before been made known or revealed, but which is now made known*, and in this place, it refers, as the succeeding passages shew, to the future conversion of the Jews to christianity.

Romans xvi, 25.—“According to the revelation of the *mystery* which was kept secret since the world began, but is now made manifest,” &c.—In this passage, the same general meaning of the word, as occurs in the last citation, is expressed by the apostle; it is *what was kept secret, but is now made manifest*. There is a difference of opinion concerning the particular thing which St. Paul here means by “*mystery*.” Some, with Locke, think it is the calling of the Gentiles, while others suppose it to be the christian religion, which before the coming of Christ was not known; except what might be gathered from the general and obscure expressions in the prophetic writings, and these

were but very imperfectly understood. The same interpretations must be used in explaining Ephesians i, 9. iii, 3, 4, and 9. vi, 19,—Colossians i, 26 and 27. ii, 2. iv, 3. and 1 Timothy iii, 9.—In each of these passages, “mystery” will be found to mean either the system of christianity in general, or the particular doctrine of the application of the benefits of the gospel indiscriminately to the Jews and Gentiles, which is termed “the calling of the Gentiles,” was frequently spoken of by Paul, and was peculiarly offensive to the Jews;—and these were called *mysteries*, because they had been long concealed and unknown, though they were now brought to light by divine revelation. With reference to the same meaning our Saviour (Matth. xiii, 35) quotes the words of the prophet, “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter *things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*”

1 Corinthians, ii, 7.—“But we speak the wisdom of God in a *mystery*,” &c.: that is, as Schleusner says, we teach the doctrine of divine truth, full of wisdom, *which had hitherto been unknown to men*. Here the same general sense occurs, as above. So, too, 1 Corinthians iv, 1, “stewards of the *mysteries* of God,” means those who were employed in teaching the truths and doctrines of the Christian religion, *which would not have been known, had not God revealed them*.

1 Corinthians, xiii, 2.—“And though I understand all *mysteries*.” This expression may either signify to understand things, which are generally considered as obscure and profound, or, according to Rosenmüller, “to understand what cannot be understood except by divine revelation,”—or we may interpret it as relating to things written in the Old Testament, with Locke, who remarks on this passage,—“any predictions relating to our Saviour, or his doctrine, or the times of the gospel, contained in the Old Testament in types, or figurative and obscure expressions, not understood before his coming, and being revealed to the world, St. Paul calls ‘mystery,’ as may be seen all through his writings.”

1 Corinthians xiv, 2.—St. Paul here mentions those, who had what was called *the gift of tongues*. “He that speaketh in an unknown tongue,” says he, “speaketh not unto men, but unto God;” that is, God alone understands him; “howbeit,” he continues, “in the spirit he speaketh *mysteries*,” that is, he speaks what those who hear him *do not understand*, not because the subject of which he treats is *unintelligible*, but because they *do not understand the language in which he delivers his discourse*.

1 Corinthians, xv, 51.—“Behold I shew you a mystery,” &c. that is, according to the use of the word already so often men-

tioned, "I teach or declare unto you what has been hitherto unknown, or very partially and obscurely known." What St. Paul here refers to, as is plain from the context, is the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, which is called a *mystery*, not on account of its being *incomprehensible*, but because it had lain obscured in concealment, till it was fully brought to light by the Gospel.

Ephesians v. 32. "This is a great *mystery*, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The word is here used to express *that which has a mystical or allegorical sense, or is to be explained by an allegorical interpretation*. St. Paul had just spoken of the duty of affection in the husband towards the wife in the conjugal relation. He then (v. 31) cites a passage on this subject from Genesis ii. 24. and when he immediately adds, "this is a great *mystery*," &c. it is the same as if he had said, "this is capable of being applied in a remarkable allegorical sense with reference to Christ and his church;" that is, Christ has the same love for his church, or his true followers, that the husband should have for his wife. St. Paul, as Rosenmüller remarks, "in this and similar passages has imitated *the mystical mode of interpretation* common among the Jews, by which when some person, history, or rite is mentioned, another thing is compared with and illustrated by it."

2 Thessalonians ii. 7. "For the *mystery* of iniquity doth already work;"—that is, *concealed, secret* iniquity. The apostle had just spoken of "the man of sin." Who, or what, is meant by this expression is a question, which has long agitated and divided commentators: but it is of no importance to our present purpose. St. Paul evidently alludes to some person or principles, whose nature and influence would be malignant and dangerous, but whose open appearance was for a time prevented. Still it was already working in secret; and therefore he calls it the *mystery of iniquity*, that is, iniquity operating in darkness and concealment.

1 Timothy, iii. 16. "And without controversy great is the *mystery* of godliness," &c. Here, whatever reading we may prefer, or whatever interpretation we may give of the rest of the verse, it is evident that the word *mystery*,—the only point with which we are now concerned,—cannot mean any thing *inexplicable or incomprehensible*, because the things, which the apostle mentions as making up this mystery, were *facts* familiarly known to all who knew of christianity,—the appearance of the power and agency of God in Jesus Christ, &c. "Mystery" undoubtedly has in this place the signification so often referred to, viz. *what was not known till it was revealed*. The word translated

"godliness" is one frequently used in speaking of Christianity at large; thus "the mystery of godliness" signifies those truths and facts relating to christianity, which were unknown till the time of divine revelation. If those, who think they find in this verse the doctrine of the deity of Christ, are willing to grant that this doctrine is *mysterious*, only because it was never known till christianity, as they say, brought it to light, there cannot, it should seem, be any particular objection to the use of the word in that sense.

Revelation i. 20. "The mystery of the seven stars:" that is, *that of which the seven stars are the symbol*, that which is hidden under this emblematical representation.

Revelation x. 7. "The mystery of God should be finished;" that is, the *secret* or *concealed*, not the *unintelligible*, purpose of God should be accomplished. What this purpose was is matter of dispute.

Revelation xvii. 5. "And upon her forehead was a name written, *Mystery*," &c. In the use of this name, the allusion is probably to the symbolical and enigmatical nature of the representation here introduced,—there being a hidden sense under it. So likewise in the 7th verse of this chapter, "I will tell thee the *mystery* of the woman," that is, I will tell thee that of which the woman is the emblem or figurative representation.

It appears, then, after an examination of all the passages in the New Testament, in which the word "*Mystery*" occurs, that it is no where used in such a sense, as to justify those incorrect applications of it, which are so common in theological writings and in conversation. The sacred writers never attach to it any such signification, as will require us to renounce the exercise of our reason, to prostrate our understandings, and hold ourselves in readiness to receive whatever comes to us under the shelter of its name,—however absurd, however irreconcilable in different parts with itself. Yet in such a sense the word has been abundantly used by those, who in the support of human inventions in religion have met objections, which they could not answer, and encountered difficulties, which they could not otherwise surmount.

It might be interesting to trace the history of the abuse of this word. One of the original sources of corruption on this, as well as on many other religious subjects, was the desire, so common in the early ages, to give a false character of dignity and an imposing appearance to christianity, in order to recommend it to those, to whom it was addressed. "The profound respect," says Mosheim,* "that was paid to the Greek and Ro-

* Vol. 1, p. 199

man *mysteries*, and the extraordinary sanctity that was attributed to them, was a further circumstance, that induced christians to give their religion a *mystic air*, in order to put it upon an equal foot in point of dignity with that of the pagans. For this purpose they gave the name of *mysteries* to the institutions of the gospel, and decorated particularly the holy sacrament with that solemn title." Thus probably the abuse of this word was confirmed, if not introduced; and even this might be justified by the singular argument of Tillotson, who assigns as one of the reasons, why, as he says, "God was pleased to appear in our nature," that, as "the world was much given to admire mysteries," they might thus have a mystery worthy of their admiration.* We know indeed, that the passion for what is strange, wonderful, and confounding, has always been prevalent among mankind, and that this passion has had a most extravagant indulgence in the different religions of the world, because the nature of the subject affords a wide range for the license of conjecture and speculation. But are we prepared to believe that the Christian dispensation was on set purpose adapted to employ and gratify this propensity?

The *most prevalent* Scripture sense of "mystery," as we have seen, is *something which mankind had not known, or which the light of reason alone could not discover, but which was revealed*; and never does it mean any thing in its nature unintelligible, much less any thing, which reason sees to be self contradictory and at war with the first principles of knowledge. The word, like all other words, has its proper uses. We often say a thing is *mysterious*, because we do not understand it; but there is a difference between what we do not understand and what cannot be understood. It is very common to remark, that the ways of God are a mystery to us, because we cannot look on them as a whole with one unbroken view, because we do not see all their bearings, are not apprised of the purposes they are designed to answer, and cannot open the long track of consequences to which they may lead; but can we feel satisfied in believing, merely on the strength of this word, doctrines which are derogatory to the character of the Deity, and hostile to what reason and Scripture teach us of the nature of his purposes and government? Are we not sometimes required by man thus to surrender the use of our faculties? Is not believing in what are called *mysteries* often the same thing as believing without ideas? Are not mysteries in religion too frequently the resource to which men are driven by the apprehension, that their doctrines will not bear the scrutiny of examination; and are they not thus kept, like the

* Sermon concerning the incarnation of Christ.

monarchs of the East, within the narrow precincts of retirement, lest what is adored, as the dictates of divinity, if exposed, might be discovered to be nothing but the dream of a mortal? And after all, those, who believe that Christianity has inexplicable mysteries, will do well to remember the words of Moses to the Israelites.—“*the secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*”

W.

 UNITARIAN EXPOSITOR.

No. V.

OF the texts which are thought to contain the application of the title God to Christ, the first we shall examine is the 28th verse of the 20th chap. of John. “Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.” This is one of the passages adduced by the orthodox to show, that, “the New Testament gives to Christ, the appellation of God, in such a manner, as that, according to the fair rules of interpretation, only the Supreme God can be meant.”* We beg of our readers, to reflect for a moment on what they are here called upon to believe. Thomas, as a Jew, must have been well instructed in the nature of the divine being; he must have known that God was an infinite, eternal, invisible spirit. He was well assured too, that his master was a man; nobody, we take it, will doubt that; and he was suddenly brought from entire incredulity in the resurrection of him whom he knew to be a man, to acknowledge him as his God. And this sudden and violent conversion, this conviction that a man was God, was brought about by what means? By his having an opportunity to satisfy himself by his bodily senses of sight and touch, that it was in truth his master, who had a few days before been crucified, that now stood before him. Did he believe that the Supreme Being had suffered on the cross? Did he believe that he was in the immediate presence of his God? If he did, he was wonderfully composed on the occasion.—If Thomas, in fact, applied the title to our Saviour, we must acknowledge that he used the word either in the highest, or in an inferior sense. If in the latter, no unitarian would object to the interpretation; if in the former, then it follows that Thomas, being satisfied that the person whom he addressed was indeed his master whom he had known to be crucified, believed

* Professor Stuart's Letters, p. 57. 2d edition.

in consequence, that this person was God; or in other words, his conviction that his master was the unchangeable God, was founded upon his conviction that he had died and risen again.— It may perhaps be contended that Thomas was not only instantly convinced that Jesus was God, but that, at the same moment, he obtained a clear insight into the doctrine of the two natures, and into those reasonings and distinctions by which it is proved, that the sufferings of the being who was God, were not the sufferings of God. To this we do not think it necessary to reply otherwise than by stating the fact, that the doctrine of the hypostatic union was not clearly understood, till it was definitively settled by the council of Ephesus, A. D. 431. We think this is sufficient to render it altogether improbable that Thomas was acquainted with this doctrine; and consequently, if he believed that Christ was God in the highest sense, the only sense which can avail the trinitarian, he must have believed that God, properly speaking, had died and risen again. It seems to us then necessary to conclude, from the nature of the case, either that the words of Thomas are an exclamation, or that the title God is applied to our Saviour in an inferior sense. It is of little consequence which solution is adopted; but we feel it of great importance to free an apostle from what we should consider so heavy a charge, as that of calling one who had been tempted, had suffered and *died*, the infinite Jehovah.

We will next turn to Hebrews, i. 8, 9. “But unto the Son, *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even thy God*, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” Of this passage we have already given an explanation; (Christian Disciple, vol. ii. p. 43.) but if any one is not satisfied with the interpretation there given, and still thinks the words are addressed to a being who is God in the highest sense, we must ask him if he thinks the Supreme God has *fellows*; if there is a God superior to the Supreme God. It is very clear that there is a being superior to him who is addressed in this passage; and however others may feel, we do not ourselves like to hold a contradiction in terms; we find it necessary to believe, that he, who has been exalted by his God ‘above his fellows,’ is not the Supreme Being.

These two are the only passages in the New Testament in which we conceive that it can be maintained, with any plausibility, that the title *God* is applied to Christ. Others indeed are adduced by trinitarians, but we think, and shall hereafter endeavour to show, that the application is incorrect. In the interpretation of these two, it would seem, that our opponents had for-

gotten the fact which we stated in our last, that in scripture language, the title, God, is not confined to Jehovah. They have insisted that because Jesus Christ is called God, he must be possessed of supreme divinity. We believe that they may be called Gods, "to whom the word of God came."

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

EXTRACT FROM MITFORD.

It has often been said, that if Christianity were only a divinely authorized system of morals, if it had only sanctioned the laws of virtue, by the fear of future punishment, and the hope of future happiness, it was unnecessary. The heathens, we are told, were good moralists, and it is not to be supposed that miracles would have been wrought, to confirm what reason was sufficient to teach. The following passage from that admirable historian, Mitford, satisfactorily illustrates the power of unassisted reason. He is speaking of the celebrated plague at Athens.

"The moral effects of this extraordinary visitation, reported by that judicious eye-witness to whom we owe this whole detail, deserve our notice. Wherever the doctrine of retribution in a life to come, for good and evil deeds in this world, has taken any hold on the minds of men, a general calamity strongly tends to check the passions, to inspire serious thought, to direct attention toward that future existence, and to make both hope and fear converge to the great Author of nature, the all-powerful, all-wise, and all-just God, who can recompense the sufferings of the good with endless blessings, and convert to lasting misery any short-lived joys that can arise from the perpetration of evil. But in Athens, where the Deity was looked to very generally and very anxiously for the dispensation of temporal good and evil only, it was otherwise. The fear of the divine power, says Thucydides, ceased ; for it was observed, that to worship or not to worship the gods, to obey or not to obey those laws of morality which have always been held most sacred among men, availed nothing. All died alike ; or, if there was a difference, the virtuous, the charitable, the generous, exposing themselves beyond others, were the first and the surest to suffer. An inordinate, and before unknown, licentiousness of manners followed. Let us enjoy ourselves, let us, if possible, drown thought in pleasure

to-day, for to-morrow we die, was the prevailing maxim. No crime, therefore, that could give the means of any enjoyment, was scrupled; for such were the ravages of the disease, that for perpetrator, accuser, and judges, all to survive, so that an offender could be convicted in regular course of law, was supposed against all chance. The final consummation pending over equally the criminal and the innocent, by the decree of fate or of the gods, any punishment that human laws could decree, was little regarded. How most to enjoy life, while life remained, became the only consideration; and this relaxation, almost to a dissolution of all moral principle, is lamented by Thucydides as a lasting effect of the pestilence of Athens."

FULLER.

THE GOOD SCHOOLMASTER.

THERE is scarce any profession in the Commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof, I conceive to be these. First, young scholars make this calling their refuge; yea, perchance, before they have taken any degree in the university, commence school-masters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession, but onely a rod and a ferule. Secondly, others who are able, use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the rents in their present fortune till they can provide a new one, and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward, which in some places they receive, being masters to the children, and slaves to their parents. But see how well our schoolmaster behaves himself.

He studieth his scholars' natures as carefully as they their books, and ranks their dispositions into several forms. And though it may seem difficult for him in a great school to descend to all particulars, yet experienced schoolmasters may quickly make a grammar of boys' natures, and reduce them all (saving some few exceptions) to these general rules.

1. Those that are ingenious and industrious. The conjunction of two such planets in a youth presages much good unto him. To such a lad a frown may be a whipping, and a whipping a death; yea, where their master whips them once, shame whips them all the week after. Such natures he useth with all gentleness.

2. Those that are ingenious and idle. These think with the hare in the fable, that running with snails (so they count the rest

of their schoolfellows) they shall come soon enough to the post ; though sleeping a good while before their starting. Oh, a good rod would finely take them napping.

3. Those that be dull and diligent. Wines, the stronger they be, the more lees they have when they are new. Many boyes are muddy-headed till they be clarified with age, and such afterwards prove the best. Bristoll diamonds are both bright and squared and pointed by nature, and yet are soft and worthless ; whereas Orient ones in India are rough and rugged naturally. Hard, rugged and dull natures of youth acquit themselves afterwards the JEWELS of the country ; and therefore their dulnesse is at first to be born with, if they be diligent. That schoolmaster deserves to be beaten himself, who beats nature in a boy for a fault.

4. Those that are invincibly dull and negligent also. Correction may reform the latter, not amend the former. All the whetting in the world can never set a razor's edge on that which hath no steel in it. Such boyes he consigneth over to other professions. Shipwrights and boatmakers will choose those crooked pieces of timber, which other carpenters refuse.

He is able, diligent, and methodical in his teaching, not leading them rather in a circle than forwards. He minces his precepts for children to swallow, hanging clogs on the nimbleness of his own soul, that his scholars may go along with him. He is moderate in inflicting deserved correction. Many a schoolmaster better answereth the name of παιδοτεριβης than παιδαγωγος, rather tearing his scholars' flesh with whipping, then giving them good education. No wonder if his scholars hate the Muses, being presented unto them in the shapes of fiends and furies. Junius complains de insolenti carnificina of his schoolmaster, by whom "conscindebatur flagris septies aut octies in dies singulos." Yea, heare the lamentable verses of poore Tussèr in his own life.

From Paul's I went, to Eton sent,
To learn straitways the Latine phrase,
When fifty three stripes given to me
At once I had—
For fault but small, or none at all,
It came to passe, thus beat I was ;
See, Udal, see the mercy of thee
To me poore lad.

Such an Orbilius marres more scholars then he makes : their tyranny hath caused many tongues to stammer, which spake plain by nature, and whose stuttering at first was nothing else but fears quavering on their speech at their master's presence. And whose mauling them about their heads hath dull'd those, who in quicknesse exceeded their master.

WILLIAM WALDRON,

Was the first minister of the New Brick Church in Boston, which was built in the year 1721. He was ordained there May 23, 1722, and died Sept. 11, 1727, at the age of 32 years. From the sermons delivered at his death and published by Dr. Cotton Mather, and four other ministers, it appears that he was regarded as a man of more than ordinary talents and goodness, and had given the promise of great eminence and usefulness.

We have lately had the perusal of some manuscript letters in his own hand-writing, a few extracts from which may be acceptable to some of our more curious readers. They are all written to his brother in Portsmouth, between September, 1723, and March, 1724.

"Oct. 9th, 1723.—* * * Dr. Cutter has displayed himself in the King's Chapel once and again; and though he has made a declaration that if there be not an harmony and good correspondence maintained between the ministry of the town and himself, it should be none of his fault; this he hath prefaced with a Sermon (shall I call it) full of raillery and bitter invectives. He insists, it seems, upon the invalidity of our ordination, and spares not to belch it, that we have no ministers but two or three that have been created by a *human creature*. You'll see the spirit of the man if you consult the second chapter of Ezekiel, for that was the chapter that he read when he preached, tho' for the getting of it he was forced to break in upon the known order of the Church of England."

In another letter he expresses himself thus: "As for me, the more I consider and weigh matters, the more it appears to me that we are ripening for ruin. We have forsaken the Lord that made us, and he now seems to be withdrawing from us. Yet, blessed be his name, there are some yet who stand in the gap, and do strongly and answerably maintain the way of these churches. Here are some sober remarks published upon a book called 'A modest proof of the order and government settled by Christ and his apostles in his church.' If you have seen neither, I will send them to you. The answerer is Master Wigglesworth; though it is a secret and must be concealed."

In the next letter we find something further: "Herewith I send you the pamphlets I mentioned in my last. Notwithstanding what I said of the author of the *Sober Remarks* you must not think them all made by the same hand. Where there is any bitterness shewn in them, where there are any ungentlemanly jeers, that excellent man utterly disclaims them; but the most ingenious and argumentative part of the book is his. But I really

intreat you not to mention it on any account ; for he is greatly solicitous of having the matter remain a secret. He industriously conceals himself, and there are but three or four at most that do know any thing about it."

This Master Wigglesworth was the first professor of divinity in Harvard College. He is frequently mentioned in these letters, and in one of them his character appears at considerable length. "I must needs say, I cannot in justice imagine that this good gentleman is second to any. He is certainly a first rate, if not the first rate. His body is the less acceptable part of him ; *that* is no wise to be despised. As to his intellectual powers, his being chosen into the professorship by some of our wisest and best men must speak him superlative. As for his publick preaching, you would guess him to be almost under an inspiration in it. His delivery is with great deliberation and distinctness. He has a small still voice, not loud, but audible. As for the impediment you mention, it is only a graceful lisp, that does not at all affect his speech to make him unintelligible. When I have heard him preach I have never observed but that every syllable was clearly articulated. And as for his never being a candidate for the gospel ministry, it is a mistake. He always was so, ever since he preached, and is so now. He has been in nomination (though I don't so well like the method) more than once, and the reason why he has been neglected is owing to the ignorance and unskillfulness of the rabble, who make the majority. They disgust every thing but noise and nonsense, and cannot be content to sit quiet, unless their auditory nerves are drummed upon with a voice like thunder. His meeting with no acceptance is a great reproach upon the understanding of the multitude. I guess he would hardly be prevailed to leave his business here only to make a fruitless journey, for I don't think he has any thing in prospect, I mean a settlement ; and further, the learned this way would be loth to part with him. He is treated with great respect this way, and should he come to Portsmouth, your clergy, tho' his seniors, must stoop to him. As for his deafness I look on it as a good ministerial qualification. Mr. Prince is an excellent preacher, a fine scholar, but has an uncouth delivery ; he is raw and uncultivated, not much of a gentleman. I should for my part pretty much suspect his conduct among you.—I asked the professor whether if he should be asked to preach any where for a small term, he could leave his business, and mentioned Piscataqua to him. He replied, that he would consult the president in such an affair. But, he added, I believe it will be best for them to hear only one. He is a very prudent man, and I am confident that if he had been sent to after the same manner that

Mr. Welsteed has, he would not have come ; and yet he is a humble, meek, modest man."

It appears that considerable difficulty was found in settling a minister at Portsmouth. Our readers may not be displeased with the following paragraph on the subject. "You have ere this Mr. Gee's answer made public among you. I want to hear how you received it, and what your consequent proceedings are. The talk here is of Mr. Welsteed* for Portsmouth, and he is far superior to any that offers, unless the Professor could be obtained, which I believe is almost impracticable from some considerations. Let who will come, I fear Mr. *Smoothing Plain* will wheedle, ensnare, and * * * them. You will be so kind as to let me hear how you go on in these matters. 'Tis a pity that your pulpit is so much swayed by the petticoat. But some men are born to obey, while women rampant assume to rule and govern."

In another letter, speaking of several persons who were recommended as candidates for Portsmouth, a fact is stated respecting Mr. Prince, which will excite the astonishment of the candidates of the present generation. "As to Mr. Prince, he would not go, because he had no more than sixty sermons made, and he will go no where till he has doubled the number."

We might make several more extracts from these letters, which would afford glimpses at the history and manners of the times, political as well as religious ; but the above must suffice.

LINES

WRITTEN ON VISITING THE BEAUTIFUL BURYING GROUND AT
NEW-HAVEN.

O where are they, whose all that earth could give
Beneath these senseless marbles disappeared ?
Where even they, who taught these stones to grieve ;
The hands that hew'd them, and the hearts that rear'd ?
Such the poor bounds of all that's hoped or fear'd,
Within the griefs and smiles of this short day.
Here sunk the honour'd, vanish'd the endear'd :
This the last tribute love to love could pay,
An idle pageant pile, to graces pass'd away.

Why deck these sculptur'd trophies of the tomb ?
Why, victims, garland thus the spoiler's fane ?

* Mr. Welsteed, a few years after, became the successor of Mr. Waldron.

Hope ye by these to avert oblivion's doom ;
 In grief ambitious, and in ashes vain ?
 Go, rather bid the sand the trace retain,
 Of all that parted virtue felt and did !—
 Still powerless man revolts from ruin's reign ;
 And pride has gleam'd upon the coffin-lid,
 And rear'd o'er mouldering dust the mountain pyramid.

Sink, mean memorials of what cannot die !
 Be lowly as the relics ye o'erspread !
 Nor lift your funeral forms so gorgeously,
 To tell who slumbers in each narrow bed.
 I would not honour thus the sainted dead ;
 Nor to each stranger's careless eye declare
 My sacred griefs for joy and friendship fled.
 O let me hide the names of those that were,
 Deep in my stricken heart, and shrine them only there !

REVIEW.

ARTICLE XV.

The Life of Wesley, with the Rise and Progress of Methodism.
 By Robert Southey, Esq. 2 vols. 405. 436. New-York, 1820.

AN able and impartial history of the rise and establishment of Methodism was a desideratum till the appearance of this valuable work ; which is interesting, not merely to the theologian, as narrating the progress of a new sect, but to the metaphysician and physiologist, as displaying new operations of the mind, new proofs and examples of the wonderful connexion and reciprocal influence of the mind and body. It is highly interesting to mark the growth, character, and effects of an enthusiasm which has extended so widely, and operated upon so many different individuals, to observe the power of opinion upon character, and the counteracting influence of character upon opinion ; to perceive what vast and lasting effects may be produced by the energy of one man, and from the mingled good and evil resulting from mis-directed zeal, to learn a lesson of discretion as well as fervour. All this Mr. Southey has shown himself well qualified to assist us in performing, as he has exhibited in the work before us great good sense, candour, and judgment. We think he is much more free from prejudice, than might be expected from one, who is officially pledged to support the cause of the church and king

of Great Britain ; and where he does not feel called upon to favour this, he writes, as one would anticipate, with much just feeling and fine talent. His materials were abundant, as the world has seldom seen men of more remarkable characters than the founders and early converts of Methodism, and many of the incidents of their lives strikingly exhibit the romantic quixotry of their minds. We cannot undertake to give even a brief abstract of all that is contained in these well filled volumes, but must content ourselves with exciting the curiosity of our readers by extracting some of the most remarkable facts and passages.

The subject of the memoirs was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, on the 17th of June, 1703, of highly respectable and worthy parents. His father was a clergyman of the church of England, who acquired, by writing a pamphlet in defence of the Revolution of 1688, and a poem upon the battle of Blenheim, that preferment which his talents and virtues as a clergyman could not gain for him. Religious impressions were early and deeply made upon the mind of his son John, by the care of an excellent mother, and by the imminent peril to which he was exposed, when only six years old, by the burning of his father's house. This was an incident not to be forgotten ; his deliverance strongly impressed his mother as well as himself ; and in reference to it, he had a house in flames engraved as an emblem under one of his portraits, with these words for a motto, " Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning ? " He received his school education at the Charter House, and at the age of seventeen was removed to Christ Church, Oxford. We must not omit to mention an incident, which took place in his father's family, whilst he was at school ; the story of which is similar to many other narratives which were very generally believed during the preceding century. Noises of various descriptions were heard in and about the house, such as groans, knockings, breaking of bottles, and clattering of pewter, which were attributed by all the family to some supernatural agency. We are very sorry that Mr. Southey has given this story the sanction of his belief. We had supposed that tricks enough of this sort had been played and detected, to furnish us with a satisfactory solution of any new story of the same kind. Mr. Southey remarks, in support of the credibility of this account, " With regard to the good end which they may be supposed to answer, it would be end sufficient if sometimes one of those unhappy persons who, looking through the dim glass of infidelity, see nothing beyond this life, and the narrow sphere of mortal existence, should, from the well established truth of one such story, (trifling and objectless as it might appear,) be led to a conclusion that there are more things in

heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy." But we think, that those who can resist the argument and evidence of natural and revealed religion on this subject, will be little likely to be affected by a story of this sort; if they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

It was at the University that Wesley first distinguished himself by his religious zeal. He was powerfully affected by reading the work commonly attributed to Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, and Bishop Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*. "That part in particular of this splendid work, which relates to purity of intention, affected him exceedingly. 'Instantly,' he says, 'I resolved to dedicate *all* my life to God—*all* my thoughts and words, and actions, being thoroughly convinced there was no medium; but that *every part* of my life (not *some* only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself,—that is in effect to the Devil.' " In this resolution he was joined by some young men, with whom he associated after he was chosen fellow of Lincoln College. They were nicknamed the *Holy* or the *Godly Club*, and consisted of John Wesley, and his brother Charles, George Whitefield, and a few others. It is a little remarkable, that those who were afterwards noted for extravagant irregularity in their manner of life, should have received a distinguishing appellation from the order and *method* with which they originally lived, "picking up, as they said, the very fragments of time, that not a moment of it might be lost."

Those, who are acquainted with Whitefield only through the traditions which are handed down of him in this country, will be surprised to learn, that in his youth he was little better than a graceless reprobate. He was the son of an inn-keeper, and used to appropriate to his own use the money which he took in the house, and what he could pilfer from his mother's pocket. He was a great devourer of romances, and at school, he even enacted a woman's part in a drama, and appeared in woman clothes. But Thomas à Kempis was the agent in his reformation also, and after perusing the work of that author, he used, in his intervals of leisure from attendance at the inn, to compose sermons. He and Wesley found each other congenial spirits at the university, and were fast running, with their companions, into extravagant fanaticism. They were peculiar in their dress, and habits of life, and so abstemious as greatly to injure their health, in consequence of which, one of their number died, and Wesley seemed likely soon to follow him to an early grave. A visit to his friends in some degree restored him, and he was urged by them to leave Oxford, and apply for the cure in which his father

had laboured for many years. But he obstinately refused, alleging that he thought he might do more good at the university. It was not long after this, however, that he thought himself called to go to America, to convert the Indians; and accordingly in Oct. 1735, he left Oxford, for Savannah. There he remained two years, and accomplished little besides making himself obnoxious to the settlers, and forming an acquaintance with some of the Moravian Brethren, which greatly furthered his progress in fanaticism. Upon his return to England he was persuaded to follow the example of Whitefield, and preach wherever and whenever he could collect an audience. He determined also not to confine himself to a form of prayer.

For several months after his return, he felt, as he expressed it, that he was "*sold under sin* ; that he deserved nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations ;" but the reader will learn, from the following passage, that he was born again at a quarter before nine o'clock, P. M. on the 24th of May, 1738. "On the evening of that day he went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate-street, where one of the assembly was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans.—What followed is considered by his disciples as being of deep importance ; it may therefore best be given in his own words :—'About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed ; I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation : and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more special manner despitely used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, This cannot be faith, for where is thy joy ?—How many a thought arising from that instinctive logic which is grounded on common sense, has been fathered upon the personified principle of evil ! Here was a plain contradiction in terms,—an assurance which had not assured him. He returned home, and was buffeted with temptations ; he cried out and they fled away ; they returned again and again. 'I as often lifted up my eyes,' he says, 'and He sent me help from his holy place. And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might under the law, as well as under grace : but then I was sometimes, if not often conquered ; now I was always conqueror.' "

If all he says of himself soon after this, be true, we think he had better have remained as he was.—"How he judged of him-

self at this time, appears by the result of a curious self-examination, in which he tried himself by the test of St. Paul : *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are past away : behold all things are become new.* 'First,' says Wesley, 'his judgments are new ; his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness. He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God ; to have no good thing abiding in him, but all that is corrupt and abominable ; in a word, to be wholly earthly, sensual, and devilish, a motley mixture of beast and devil. Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.' But how completely his mind had lost its balance at this time, may be judged from the following anecdote. He was in the habit of visiting, when in London, at the house of a friend of the name of Hutton, and a few days after he had been converted, "when Mr. Hutton had finished a sermon, which he was reading on a Sunday evening to his family and his guests, John stood up, and to their utter astonishment assured them, that he had never been a Christian till within the last five days ; that he was perfectly certain of this, and that the only way for them to become Christians was to believe and confess that they were not so now. Hutton, who was exceedingly surprised at such a speech, only replied, 'Have a care, Mr. Wesley, how you despise the benefits received by the two sacraments !'—But when he repeated the assertion at supper, in Mrs. Hutton's presence, she made answer with female readiness, 'If you were not a christian ever since I knew you, you was a great hypocrite, for you made us all believe you were one.' He replied, 'that when we had renounced every thing but faith, and then got into Christ, then and not till then had we any reason to believe that we were Christians.' Mr. Hutton asked him, 'If faith only was necessary to save us, why did our Saviour give us his divine sermon on the mount ?'—But Wesley answered, 'that was the *letter that killeth.*' 'Hold,' said his antagonist, 'you seem not to know what you say : are our Lord's words the letter that killeth ?'

"But it would have been as easy to cure a fever by reasoning with the patient, as to have made Wesley at this time doubt the soundness of his new opinions."

Soon after this he went to Germany, to visit the establishment of Moravian brethren at Herrnhut, and to dispute with Count Zinzendorf, their patron and head, on his favourite doctrine of Christian perfection. His love for the brethren began to wax cold at this visit, and a year or two afterwards he came to an open separation from them. Returning again to England, he

was instant in preaching, in season and out of season ; and he now began to produce those paroxysms of bodily and mental disease, which have ever since continued to be a characteristic of his followers. At first there was some doubt felt by Wesley himself and many of his friends, whether this violent excitement were a sign of good or evil, whether it were the operation of God or of Satan. But when it was once declared to be the work of the Holy Spirit, a door was opened for every species of extravagance which this sort of mental intoxication could produce. At that time, these remarkable effects were perhaps without any parallel in the history of human nature ; they have since been rivalled and illustrated by the operations of Mesmer and his pupils, the professors of Animal Magnetism, and we are now aware that strong passions affect the system as violently as strong drink, and may be as contagious as the plague or the leprosy. The volumes before us contain details of many cases of this disorder, one of the worst diseases to which human nature is liable, in some instances even destroying the understanding altogether. We know that many examples may be adduced of those who have passed through this crisis, and have ever after led lives which were an honour to their christian profession. But we ask, if there is any particular tendency to good in the paroxysm itself? Surely one might as well pretend that the excitement of animal magnetism would make men virtuous. Or is there any great good likely to result from the idea, which seems to have been entertained by Wesley, that he, who has in this manner been born again, has reached to perfection, and cannot sin because he is born of God? Rather is it not almost too obvious to be mentioned, that it is one of the most dangerous impressions that can be made upon the mind of man? Is it any answer to this, to say, that many are virtuous who are possessed of this idea, notwithstanding its tendency? We reply, that we believe it is *notwithstanding* its tendency, and that any thing but virtue is the *natural* consequence of it. So, too, we believe, that there may be good men who are Mahometans, or worshippers of Juggernaut, *notwithstanding* the grossness of their creeds. We shall perhaps be referred to the many instances on record of those who were notoriously profligate, and were made, by the preaching of Whitefield and Wesley, conscientious, religious men. To this we esteem it a sufficient reply, that the eloquence which could fill the contribution boxes with necklaces and ear rings, and empty the pockets of Franklin, not merely of coppers, but of silver and gold, may well account for all such effects likewise. It was not the peculiar doctrine, but the powerful preaching of some of the plain truths of Christianity, which wrought these

wonders; and doubtless the rare zeal, with which they taught the importance and the necessity of repentance and reformation, had a very beneficial effect upon the abandoned and profligate. But beyond this we think the tendency of the tenets both of Wesley and Whitefield decidedly pernicious.

For several years these extraordinary men united their efforts to obtain the same end, and Methodism began to be consolidated by the formation of classes, bands, and circuits; while, at the same time, the course which was taken by the leaders tended necessarily to a separation from the church of England, which they had hitherto been very desirous to avoid. About the year 1740, however, there arose a subject of dispute among themselves. Whitefield was attached to the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination, which Wesley thought it necessary to oppose. Whitefield was exceedingly anxious to avoid the controversy, probably dreading the superior skill of Wesley; and good reason he had to decline the dispute; for Wesley, though not quite equal to his friend in oratory, was much his superior in learning and in power of arguing. On this subject, however, he poured forth an overwhelming and appalling flood of eloquence as well as argument. We must make room for the following extract, the excellence of which, we think, will more than compensate for its length. After showing that the doctrine of predestination makes all preaching vain, as needless to the elect, and useless to the reprobate; that it tends to produce spiritual pride in some, and absolute despair in others; he goes on to say that it is full of blasphemy, representing the invitations of Christ as mere mockery, and the God of all grace as more cruel, false, and unjust than the devil.

"This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the *horrible decree* of Predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with everyasserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil; more false, more cruel, more unjust. But you say, you will prove it by scripture. Hold! What will you prove by scripture? that God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that scripture proves, it never proves this: whatever be its true meaning, it cannot mean this. Do you ask what is its true meaning then? If I say, I know not, you have gained nothing; for there are many scriptures, the true sense whereof neither you nor I shall know, till death is swallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to say it had no sense at all, than to say it had such a sense as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean beside, that the God of truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will, it cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjust. No scripture can mean that God is not love, or that his mercies are not over all his works: that is, whatever it prove beside, no scripture can prove Predestination.

"This is the blasphemy for which I abhor the doctrine of Predestination; a doctrine upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment, call it election, reprobation, or what you please, (for all comes to the same thing,) one might say to our adversary the devil, 'Thou fool, why dost thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and useless as our preaching.—Hearest thou not that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands, and that he doth it more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee; but he can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell! Thou canst only entice; but his unchangeable decree to leave thousands of souls in death, compels them to continue in sin, till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou tempest; he forceth us to be damned, for we cannot resist his will. Thou fool! why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearest thou not that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of souls, the murderer of men! Moloch caused only children to pass through the fire, and that fire was soon quenched; or, the corruptible body being consumed, its torments were at an end; but God, thou art told, by his eternal decree, fixed before they had done good or evil, causes not only children of a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fire of hell; that fire which never shall be quenched; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming and never consumed; but the smoke of their torment, because it is God's good pleasure, ascendeth up for ever.'

"Oh, how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he cry aloud, and spare not! How would he lift up his voice, and say, To your tents, O Israel! flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish. But whither will ye flee! Into heaven? He is there. Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven, his throne, and earth, his footstool, to witness against you: ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally! Sing, O hell, and rejoice, ye that are under the earth! for God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising of the sun, unto the going down thereof. Here, O death, is thy sting! They shall not, cannot escape, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Here, O grave, is thy victory! Nations yet unborn, or ever they have done good or evil, are doomed never to see the light of life, but thou shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever. Let all those morning stars sing together, who fell with Lucifer, son of the morning! Let all the sons of hell shout for joy; for the decree is past, and who shall annul it?

"Yes! the decree is past; and so it was before the foundation of the world. But what decree? Even this: 'I will set before the sons of men life and death, blessing and cursing;' and 'the soul that chooseth life shall live, as the soul that chooseth death die.' This decree, whereby whom God 'did foreknow, he did predestinate,' was indeed from everlasting: this, whereby all who suffer Christ to

make them alive, are 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God,' now standeth fast, even as the moon, and the faithful witness in heaven; and when heaven and earth shall pass away, yet this shall not pass away, for it is as unchangeable and eternal as the being of God that gave it. This decree yields the strongest encouragement to abound in all good works, and in all holiness; and it is a well spring of joy, of happiness also, to our great and endless comfort. This is worthy of God. It is every way consistent with the perfection of his nature. It gives us the noblest view both of his justice, mercy, and truth. To this agrees the whole scope of the Christian Revelation, as well as all the parts thereof. To this Moses and all the prophets bear witness; and our blessed Lord, and all his apostles. Thus Moses, in the name of the Lord, 'I call heaven and earth to record against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing, therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live.' Thus Ezekiel (to cite one prophet for all,) 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die; the son shall not bear (eternally) the iniquity of the father. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.' Thus our blessed Lord, 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink!' Thus his great apostle St. Paul, 'God commandeth all men, every where, to repent.' *All men, every where*; every man, in every place, without any exception, either of place or person. Thus St. James, 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him!' Thus St. Peter, 'The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' And thus St. John, 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.'

"O hear ye this, ye that forget God! ye cannot charge your death upon him. 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?' saith the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore, turn yourselves, and live ye.'—'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?'

"A history of Wesley's life would be imperfect, unless it contained this memorable passage,—the most remarkable and the most powerful in all his works. It exasperated, beyond measure, those who, in their own conceit, had taken out their patent of election, and considered themselves, in Mr. Toplady's language, (himself one of the number,) as 'kings *incog.*, travelling, disguised like pilgrims, to their dominions above.' Even temperate Calvinists were shocked, and have said, that Mr. Wesley's 'horrid appeal to all the devils in hell gave a sort of infernal tone to the controversy.'—pp. 281—284.

This "triumphant specimen of impassioned argument" caused a breach between Whitefield and Wesley, which was never entirely forgotten or repaired; and it is not to be expected that the disciples should be more charitable and forgiving than the teachers. We believe that the disagreement between the two classes of Methodists is as violent as between any other two denominations of christians. Yet, as is the case with many of those who warmly contest each others' opinions, we believe it will be found that the dispute was, in respect to some points, rather about words than things; for the man who could write thus powerfully on the pernicious notion of election and reprobation, could, at the same time, inculcate what seems to us an equally dangerous opinion; that sinless perfection is attainable in this life, by passing through the process of regeneration. He, as well as Whitefield, looked upon all the unawakened as in a state of condemnation; and we are quite unable to discover any practical or real difference between regarding one's self as elect of God by an absolute decree, and believing that we are in a state of sinless perfection. It may be said, that in the former case, there is a necessity of final perseverance, while in the latter, one may fall away from his first love. But truly we cannot see what temptation can affect him who is perfect, and the difference seems to us no greater than between being infallible, and being never in the wrong. The difference, however, such as it was, was enough to dispute about, and it resulted in an entire separation, and a genuine *odium theologicum* between the disciples of Whitefield and Wesley.

Wesley had once a whimsical proof of the horror with which the high flying Calvinists regarded him. One afternoon, on the road from Newport Pagnel to Northampton. "I overtook," says he, "a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as he did: but I told him, over and over, we had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another. And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares, and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer, told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him 'no, I am John Wesley himself!' Upon which,

*Improvisum asperis veluti qui sentibus anguem
Pressit,*

he would gladly have run away outright; but being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton."

—p. 286.

Whitefield himself never gave into the bigotry which distinguished his followers, but was always on terms of at least decent civility with Wesley, till his death in 1770.

The Methodistic convulsions, or as they were called, *the throes of the new birth*, were not experienced at first under Whitefield's preaching, and it seems he thought they were not to be encouraged. In a little while, however, he as well as Wesley began to produce these effects. The hearers were *cut to the heart*, they were *seized with strong pangs*, and in the loose language of fanaticism, they were "constrained to roar aloud, while the sword of the spirit was dividing asunder their souls, and spirits, and joints, and marrow." Though these scenes have been often repeated in this country, we hope that many of our readers have not been compelled to witness them, and we extract the following account, that they may judge of the frightful nature of what were called, and were sincerely believed to be, exhibitions of the power of God.

"Returning from Kingswood one evening, Wesley was exceedingly pressed to go back to a young woman. 'The fact,' he says, 'I nakedly relate, and leave every man to his own judgment of it. I went. She was nineteen or twenty years old, but could not write or read. I found her on the bed, two or three persons holding her. It was a terrible sight. Anguish, horror, and despair above all description, appeared in her pale face. The thousand distortions of her whole body showed how the dogs of hell were gnawing at her heart. The shrieks intermixed were scarce to be endured; but her stony eyes could not weep. She screamed out, as words could find their way, 'I am damned, damned; lost for ever! Six days ago you might have helped me—but it is past—I am the Devil's now—I have given myself to him—his I am—him I must serve—with him I must go to hell—I will be his—I will serve him—I will go with him to hell—I cannot be saved—I will not be saved—I must, I will, I will be damned!' She then began praying to the devil: we began, 'Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!' She immediately sunk down as asleep; but as soon as we left off, broke out again with inexpressible vehemence. 'Stony hearts, break! I am a warning to you. Break, break, poor stony hearts! Will you not break? What can be done more for stony hearts? I am damned that you may be saved! Now break, break, poor stony hearts. You need not be damned, though I must.' She then fixed her eyes on the corner of the ceiling, and said, 'There he is! aye, there he is! Come, good devil, come! Take me away! You said you would dash my brains out: come, do it quickly! I am your's—I will be your's! take me away!' We interrupted her by calling again upon God: on which she sunk down as before, and another young woman began to roar as loud as she had done. My brother now came in, it being about nine o'clock. We continued in prayer till past eleven, when

God, in a moment, spoke peace into the soul ; first, of the first-tormented, and then of the other ; and they both joined in singing praise to Him who had stilled the enemy and the avenger.'

In these words Wesley describes this hideous scene of frenzy and fanaticism, eager to proclaim it as a manifestation of his power, instead of seeking to prevent the repetition of such ravings."

Some instances occurred in which deception and collusion were pretty evident, "but suspicions of this kind," says Southey, "made little impression upon his intoxicated understanding ; the fanaticism which he had excited in others, was now re-acting upon himself." There were some cases also, which, strange as it may seem, was not a little whimsical and ludicrous. "The Methodists at Wexford, (Ireland,) met in a long barn, and used to fasten the door, because they were annoyed by a Catholic mob. Being thus excluded from the meeting, the mob became curious to know what was done there ; and taking counsel together, they agreed that a fellow should get in and secrete himself before the congregation assembled, so that he might see all that was going on, and, at a proper time, let in his companions. The adventurer could find no better means of concealment than by getting into a sack which he found there, and lying down in a situation near the entrance. The people collected, secured the door as usual, and, as usual, began their service by singing. The mob collected also, and growing impatient, called repeatedly upon their friend Patrick to open the door ; but Pat happened to have a taste for music, and he liked the singing so well, that he thought, as he afterwards said, it would be a thousand pities to disturb it. And when the hymn was done, and the itinerant began to pray, in spite of all the vociferation of his comrades, he thought that, as he had been so well pleased with the singing, he would see how he liked the prayer ; but, when the prayer proceeded, "the power of God," says the relater, "did so confound him, that he roared out with might and main ; and not having the power to get out of the sack, lay bawling and screaming, to the astonishment and dismay of the congregation, who probably supposed that Satan himself was in the barn. Somebody, at last, ventured to see what was in the sack ; and helping him out, brought him up, confessing his sins, and crying for mercy. This is the most comical case of instantaneous conversion that ever was recorded, and yet the man is said to have been thoroughly converted."

As Wesley grew older, these fits became less and less common, and it is to be hoped, that with the progress of information and intelligence among the people, they will become still more unfrequent, and at last be unheard of. The expectation is justified,

we think, by the conduct of this class of Christians among us, so far as our personal observation has extended. As we have already said, we look upon them as one very bad effect of this system ; others are pointed out in Mr. Southey's chapter on the manners and effects of Methodism.

“ The tendency to produce mock humility and spiritual pride, is one of the evil effects of Methodism. It is chargeable also with leading to bigotry, illiberal manners, confined knowledge and uncharitable superstition. In its insolent language, all unawakened persons, that is to say, all except themselves, or such graduated professors in other evangelical sects as they are pleased to admit *ad eundem*, are contemptuously styled unbelievers. Wesley could not communicate to his followers his own Catholic charity ; indeed, the doctrine which he held forth was not always consistent with his own better feelings. Still less was he able to impart that winning deportment, which arose, in him, from the benignity of his disposition, and which no Jesuit ever possessed in so consummate a degree by art, as he by nature.

“ In proportion as Methodism obtained ground among the educated classes, its direct effects were evil. It narrowed their views and feelings ; burdened them with forms ; restricted them from recreations which kept the mind in health ; discouraged if it did not absolutely prohibit accomplishments that gave a grace to life ; separated them from general society ; substituted a sectarian in the place of a catholic spirit ; and, by alienating them from the national church, weakened the strongest cement of social order, and loosened the ties whereby men are bound to their native land. It carried disunion and discord into private life, breaking up families and friendships. The sooner you weaned your affections from those who, not being awakened, were of course in the way to perdition—the sooner the sheep withdrew from the goats, the better. Upon this head the monks have not been more remorseless than the methodists. Wesley has said in one of his sermons that, how frequently parents should converse with their children when they are grown up, is to be determined by Christian prudence. ‘ This also,’ says he, ‘ will determine how long it is expedient for children, if it be at their own choice, to remain with their parents. In general, if they do not fear God, you should leave them as soon as is convenient. But, wherever you are, take care (if it be in your power) that they do not want the necessities or conveniences of life. As for all other relations, even brothers or sisters, if they are of the world, you are under no obligation to be intimate with them : you may be civil and friendly at a distance.’ What infinite domestic unhappiness must this abominable spirit have occasioned !”

Against all this is to be set the good which is effected in all classes, particularly in the lower, by converting the abandoned reprobate into the conscientious, upright man ; the careless bold offender against the laws of God and man, into the sincere chris-

tian and obedient citizen. On this ground we have often heard it asserted, that Methodism is an excellent system for the vulgar; that indeed it is the only one which is suited to them; and that it is best it should not be supplanted by any less gross and exciting scheme of doctrine or of preaching. But thinking, as we do, that the good effects which have been mentioned, were produced not by the peculiar doctrines, but by some of those plain and important truths which are held in common by all christians, and by the wonderful eloquence and power with which they were enforced by Wesley and Whitefield, and some of their immediate companions, we are afraid, (and experience has confirmed our suspicions) that the good effects will diminish as the preachers become less able men. We do not indeed apprehend that the zealous inculcation of the necessity of repentance and amendment, in order to attain eternal life, will ever be entirely ineffectual; but we suspect strongly, that Methodism does not now effect more reformatiions, than are produced by several other modifications of Christianity; and we are sure that its consequences are in some respects more pernicious. These consequences are more clearly seen, in those parts of our country where it has extended more widely, and been less checked in its operations, than in our own immediate neighbourhood. What then is to be done? Are we to encourage and support Methodism as a good religion for the poor and the ignorant? We think not. It seems to us that the extravagancies of this species of fanaticism are one call the more upon those who are rulers in the land, to provide all possible means of instructing and enlightening the mass of the population. Too much cannot be done to this end, and the more we do, the less occasion shall we have to repent, when too late, of a culpable omission.

Great and able as Wesley undoubtedly was, and great as were the effects which he produced upon the public, there were in his character some of those extraordinary inconsistencies, which we sometimes find bringing men of superior talents even below the level of common minds. He was credulous and superstitious to a remarkable degree of simplicity. He was accustomed, on any emergency, to consult his bible for direction in a way for which we never heard it was given, using it as some of the early christians did, and acting as he thought himself directed, by a kind of *Sortes Biblicæ*.

“Whitefield was at this time urging Wesley that he would come to Bristol without delay, and keep up the sensation which had been produced there, for he himself must prepare for his return to Georgia.—These solicitations were enforced by Mr. Seward of Evesham, a young man of education and fortune, one of the most enthusiastic

and attached of Whitefield's converts. It might have been thought that Wesley, to whom all places were alike, would have hastened at the call; but he and his brother, instead of taking the matter into calm and rational consideration, had consulted the Bible upon the business, and stumbled upon uncomfortable texts. The first was, '*And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him,*' to which they added, 'not till the time was come,' that its import might correspond with the subsequent lots. Another was, '*Get thee up into this mountain, and die in the Mount, whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people.*' The next trial confirmed the impression which these had made: '*And the Children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days.*' These verses were sufficiently ominous, but worse remained behind: '*I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake,*' and pushing the trial still further, they opened upon the burial of St. Stephen the proto-martyr. 'Whether,' says Wesley in his journal, 'this was permitted only for the trial of our faith, God knoweth, and the event will show.' These unpropitious texts rendered him by no means desirous of undertaking the journey, and when it was proposed at the society in Fetterlane, Charles would scarcely bear it to be mentioned.—Yet, like a losing gamester, who, the worse he finds his fortune, is the more eagerly bent upon tempting it, he appealed again to the oracles of God, which were never designed thus to be consulted in the spirit of heathen superstition. 'He received,' says the journal, these words, as spoken to himself, and answered not again, '*Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke, and yet shalt thou not mourn or weep, neither shall thy tears run down.*' However disposed the brothers might have been that he should have declined the journey without further consultation, the members of the society continued to dispute upon it, till, seeing no probability of coming to an agreement by any other means, they had recourse to sortilege; and the lot decided that Wesley should go. This being determined, they opened the Bible 'concerning the issue,' and the auguries were no better than before: '*When wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed, shall I now require his blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?*' This was one; the final one was, '*Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem.*' There are not so many points of similitude between Bristol and Jerusalem, as between Monmouth and Macedon, and Henry the Fifth was more like Alexander than John Wesley would have acknowledged himself to resemble Ahaz; but it was clear language for an oracle. 'We dissuaded my brother,' says Charles, 'from going to Bristol, from an unaccountable fear that it would prove fatal to him. He offered himself willingly to whatever the Lord should appoint. The next day he set out, recommended by us to the grace of God. He left a blessing behind him. I desired to die with him.' 'Let me not be accounted superstitious,' says Wesley, 'if I recite the remarkable

Scriptures which offered as often as we inquired touching the consequences of this removal.' It will not be thought superfluous here to have repeated them."—vol. i. p. 214 216.

Mr. Southey has made, as our readers will have perceived by our extracts, a very entertaining as well as valuable work. He has interspersed his narrative with amusing anecdotes, and has given short and interesting memoirs of some of the most distinguished of Wesley's coadjutors. He is in general very judicious and impartial, and we should have had little to object to, could he have found it in his heart to speak somewhat less harshly of the dissenters from the church of England, and had he been a little less ready to impute to the principles of the American revolution, the blame of having produced the anarchy of France, and the disorganizing spirit which is now so troublesome in England.

ARTICLE XVI.

LOCKE's *Essay on the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles*; and LE CLERC, *on Inspiration*. Boston. Wells & Lilly. pp. 130.

THE latter of these treatises is the work of a man of acuteness and learning, such as have scarcely been surpassed, on a subject of great importance, and of such intricacy, that it may well occasion much diversity of opinion. To it is appended by the editor a very valuable exposition of the text, 2 Tim. iii. 16. The other tract, the *Essay of Locke* prefixed to his paraphrase of the Epistles, contains, in the space of forty-two small pages, more good sense, and furnishes more real assistance towards the understanding of those difficult writings, than are to be picked out with any amount of labour from all the English commentators before his time. Among the causes of obscurity of St. Paul's epistles, he enumerates the following; that they are in reality what they purport to be, *Letters*, containing allusions to many minute circumstances, temporary and forgotten, the knowledge of which is now only to be recovered from these letters themselves; that their phraseology is peculiar, they being composed in the Hellenistick dialect, that is, in Greek words with a mixture of Eastern idiom; that, as might be expected from the impetuous temper, and always overflowing mind of their author, their style is abrupt and involved; that in the course of argument there is a frequent change of person, without intimation being given, and objections of opponents inserted, without notice, in the body of discourse;—that it is frequently uncertain to what persons, opinions, or practices allusion is made; that each letter,

instead of being presented to the eye as one whole, is served up in our editions of the Bible, broken into chapters, and crumbled into verses ;—and that the habit of readers too often is to interpret them according to their own views of orthodoxy, or by the key which their favourite commentator offers, without sufficiently considering what was the sense which the author had, and must have had, in his mind. The simple rule for reading the Epistles proposed in this treatise is, not to read them as is commonly done, chapter by chapter, one portion one day and another the next, breaking off often in the middle of a sentence, commonly in the middle of an argument,—but as we should do with other letters, to read each “letter through from one end to the other, all at once, to see what was the main subject and tendency of it, or, if it had several views and purposes in it, not dependant one of another, nor in a subordination to one chief aim and end, to discover what those different matters were, and where the author concluded one, and began another ; and if there were any necessity of dividing the epistle into parts, to mark the boundaries.” The truth of these observations and the reasonableness of this rule are so obvious, that nobody can think of disputing them, and we only wonder that we can ever have failed to practice on them. Yet to almost every reader they recommend themselves with all the interest of novelty, and ever after he reads the epistles as if with another pair of eyes. No man, in our opinion, ought to think that he understands these writings, till he has read this essay, which, in a few pages, contains in effect a tolerably complete system of biblical interpretation ; and with all sincerity we congratulate the religious public on its being put into a shape so convenient for general circulation.

ARTICLE XVII.

The Sunday School, or Village Sketches.

Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand!—*Comper.*

Andover, Flagg & Gould. 1820. 18mo. pp. 251.

THIS little book exactly answers to its title and motto. It presents to us the mode of moral discipline and teaching adopted by an excellent young man, in the instruction of a weekly and Sabbath school, with various narrations of incidents taking place amongst his pupils, and the manner in which he was accustomed from

every event to derive lessons to the children. The stories are twelve in number, well imagined and pleasantly told, sufficiently interesting to engage the attention of young readers, and conveying the best moral and religious impressions. Each story is followed by an address or sermon, supposed to be made by the teacher, for the purpose of inculcating yet more forcibly the principles and instructions, which are taught in the incidents that have been related. We think the book calculated to do good, and recommend it to parents as a pleasant and instructive volume for their children. It cannot fail of leaving good impressions on their minds. The writer deserves well of his fellow christians, and we doubt not will be gratified with finding that he has attained the object he proposed to himself, which he simply states to be, "to give interest to the sabbath reading of children." It is an important object, and we hope that parents will assist to accomplish it, by putting this book into their children's hands. It will aid them both in making the sabbath pass away pleasantly, and in fixing in their minds the great objects to which the day is devoted.

ARTICLE XVIII.

A faithful Enquiry after the ancient and original doctrine of the Trinity, taught by Christ and his Apostles. In two parts. First, So far as is sufficient for our Salvation. Secondly, So far as may improve our Christian Knowledge, and establish our faith. Both which are answered in a plain and easy Manner, derived only from the word of God. By ISAAC WATTS, D. D. 1745. London, D. Eaton. 1816. pp. 48.

THIS pamphlet is quite a curiosity, and well deserves our attention on two accounts. First, because it was printed during the life time of its distinguished author, but was suppressed, and is now reprinted from a single copy accidentally preserved. But principally, from the character of the author himself, whose latest opinions concerning a doctrine, which occupied a large space in his thoughts and writings during life, are here contained. It is not an idle curiosity which leads us to inquire what were the views respecting God, in which so sincere and devout a mind finally rested. We cannot but be edified by observing the manner in which he felt and expressed himself on a subject so deeply interesting. He is one of those to whom we have been taught to look with a sort of filial confidence and attachment. We have been accustomed to breathe out our devotions in his words from

our very childhood ; as soon as we could speak we lisped praises to God in his Divine Songs ; and his name has become associated with the holiest and dearest emotions of our souls. It is connected with those pure feelings of piety, which we remember to have first caught from the lips of our mothers, and with all that is solemn and impressive in the worship of God's house, where christians for a century have sung praises in the language of Watts. Few names therefore are held in more general estimation. There is nothing in his life and character, which tends at all to change the impressions which his poetry had made, and all christians agree in naming him with respect. It is not the least of his titles to praise, that he was, in the truest sense of the word, *liberal*. The few examples of a different spirit, which are to be found in his writings, are less his fault than that of the age in which he lived, and he doubtless repented of them all, like Baxter, in the close of his life, when his heart was more enlarged, and he was better acquainted with his own weakness and imperfections. But it was always his desire to keep "orthodoxy and charity united,"—which is the title of one of his works—and he has left as many examples as any man of sobriety and caution in the investigation of religious truths, and of courtesy and moderation in the treatment of errors and their advocates. Many are the passages that might be selected from his writings, which would put to the blush, by their united earnestness and mildness, the vehement and sometimes passionate declamation of controversialists not more wise and not half so good ;—he is one of the few who have engaged warmly in controversy, and amid all its violence and perils have kept their piety and charity uninjured.

The doctrine of the Trinity, which has been the subject of so much disputation in times past, and concerning which we feel it a duty to say so much more—appears to have pressed with a heavy weight on his mind, and to have been a cause of no little uneasiness and perplexity to him. It evidently occupied his most serious meditations and devout prayers, interesting all the ardour of his heart, and all the fervour of his faith. To right opinions on this subject, he attached supreme importance ; not regarding it as a matter of curious speculation, as it is to be feared too many view it ; but as intimately connected with the religion of the soul, and deeply affecting all the religious habits of the man. Hence he never approached the subject without recollecting that the ground was holy. He wrote upon it as if trembling with reverence. Familiarity seems never to have diminished the dread which fell upon him in the contemplation of this solemn theme. He was always a stranger to the carelessness with which other

men are accustomed to treat subjects, about which they are perpetually thinking, conversing and writing. In this respect he is a model to all; and if in this christians would imitate him, avoiding even the appearance of levity and irreverence, there would be less cause for apprehension from religious controversy. We are fully sensible of the evils which may attend the frequent agitation of this subject,—that it tends to beget familiar modes of thinking and speaking of the Deity, and thus to diminish that reverence, which is essential to the maintenance of sober and constant and effective piety. This danger must have presented itself to the mind of every reflecting man. It was well expressed by the lamented Thacher,* in his Sermon on the Unity of God, (an admirable specimen of the style we recommend, however deficient in it we may sometimes be ourselves) who mentions it as an “objection to the controversy, that it unavoidably leads us to speak and think, with so much familiarity and freedom, of the existence, the nature, and the name of that awful power that made us; an idea in every form to be consecrated in our minds, and never to be connected but with our holiest thoughts, and most solemn and devout feelings.” It is to be lamented that more are not aware of this evil; for as it is impossible not to discuss the question, it is of the first importance that we should guard against its putting to hazard our devout temper.

A fine illustration of the spirit and feelings of Watts in this respect may be found in his *Solemn Address to the Deity*. No one can read it without being deeply affected. It ought to be universally studied. It is printed at length in the pamphlet before us, and we wish we had room for the whole of it here. We cannot refuse place to the following specimen.

“Dear and blessed God, hadst thou been pleased, in any one plain Scripture, to have informed me, which of the different opinions about the holy *Trinity*, among the contending parties of christians, had been true, thou knowest with how much zeal, satisfaction and joy, my unbiassed heart would have opened itself to receive and embrace the di-

* We take this opportunity to express our regret, in which we shall be joined by all lovers of religion, that no more memorials remain of this accomplished christian and scholar. He published little while living, and forbade his manuscripts to be printed at his death. Thus we are deprived of labours which might have enlightened and blessed the church, and perpetuated his name as long as sound sense and pure religion shall be valued in the world. We must add the expression of our regret, that a collection of his printed works has not been made, and that no one has been found to join to them the tribute which is so richly due to his life and character. We hope it is not still too late to look for so valuable a publication.

vine discovery. Hadst thou told me plainly, in any single text, that *the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are three real distinct persons in thy divine nature*, I had never suffered myself to be bewildered in so many doubts, nor embarrassed with so many strong fears of assenting to the mere inventions of men, instead of divine doctrine; but I should have humbly and immediately accepted thy words, so far as it was possible for me to understand them, as the only rule of my faith. Or hadst thou been pleased so to express and include this proposition in the several scattered parts of thy book, from whence my reason and conscience might with ease find out and with certainty infer this doctrine, I should have joyfully employed all my reasoning powers, with their utmost skill and activity, to have found out this inference, and ingrafted it into my soul.

“Thou hast taught me, Holy Father, by thy prophets, that the *way of holiness*, in the times of the gospel, or under the kingdom of the *Messiah*, shall be a *highway*, a plain and easy path; so that the *way-faring man*, or a stranger, though a fool, shall not err therein. And thou hast called the *poor* and the ignorant, the *mean* and the *foolish things of this world*, to the knowledge of thyself, and thy son, and taught them to receive and partake of the salvation which thou hast provided. But how can such weak creatures ever take in so strange, so difficult and so abstruse a doctrine as this; in the explication and defence whereof, multitudes of men, even men of learning and piety, have lost themselves in infinite subtilties of dispute, and endless mazes of darkness? And can this strange and perplexing notion of three real persons going to make up one true God, be so necessary and so important a part of the Christian doctrine, which, in the Old Testament and the New, is represented as so plain and so easy even to the meanest understandings?”

These passages sufficiently express the awe which was upon his mind in the contemplation of this subject, and the perplexities and embarrassments with which he was exercised. To an attentive reader they will also forcibly suggest, that Dr. Watts did not really embrace the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity; for there is not only none of the positiveness, with which the advocates of this faith are accustomed to stifle every doubt, but there is actual expression of doubtful and wavering assent. The world indeed has been satisfied to rank Watts among trinitarians; and his *Hymns*, which he wrote in the early part of his life, and by which he is almost exclusively known, do in fact maintain, and more, perhaps, than any other means, maintain, this doctrine. But however strenuous he might have been in his youth, he was less positive in his later years. The doctrine sat uneasily upon him and distressed him. His hymns he repented of, and greatly desired to alter. The more zealous amongst his brethren suspected the soundness of his faith, and called him an Arian. About two years before his death, he published his opinions at large,

which, however they might admit, in some shape, of being expressed in the established form of words, certainly were very far in meaning from the established doctrine. It became, therefore, a matter of debate, whether he died a trinitarian or not; and the uncertainty was increased by a rumour, which gained extensive currency, that he had written a more positive renunciation of the doctrine, which his friends persuaded him to destroy.

The work to which this rumour referred, has probably at length come to light, but proves to be hardly of so decisive a character as had been anticipated. It is that which we are reviewing.

The editor's preface informs us, "there is reason to believe, that a publication of it was intended and actually attempted by its worthy author; but that in consequence of undue influence from his immediate connexions, it was entirely frustrated. In a blank leaf of the original work was written in a fair hand, the following sentence verbatim:—'The Doctor printed off only fifty copies of this work, and shewed them to some friends, who all persuaded him that it would ruin his character in his old age, for publishing such dotages, and at length he was prevailed on to burn them; so that the whole impression of fifty was destroyed without publication, except this single copy of it, which by an accident escaped the flames.'"

This copy, we are told, was found "in a bookseller's shop in Southampton, in the year 1796. The author's name, &c. together with the date, were written at the bottom of the title-page, as in the present impression.

"It is probable this copy had formed part of a collection of books belonging to some member of the author's family, which had recently been exposed for sale; for in a blank leaf at the beginning of a small work which was lying by it, was written (apparently in his own hand) the following presentation, *To My Dear Sister Mrs. Mary Watts.*"

The first section of the work has this title—*The doctrine of the Trinity proved to be a plain and easy doctrine.* It is very characteristic of the author, and purports to set forth that knowledge of the doctrine which may be sufficient for salvation. This knowledge he describes as having six qualifications.

1. It must be such a knowledge of this doctrine as allows a sufficient foundation for all the necessary and most important articles of the christian faith, that relate to the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit.
2. Such knowledge of this doctrine must be *plain and easy* to obtain and to remember.
3. It must be a doctrine not only easy to be apprehended, but it must not be liable to many cavils.
4. It must be such a knowledge of this doctrine as is perfectly consistent with the notions and conceptions that the wisest of the heathens had gotten by the light of nature concerning the one true God, and with the ideas which the Jews had learnt of the same true God, both from reason

and Scripture. 5. It must be such a knowledge as may shew us in some sufficient measure what every one of the sacred Three hath done, and what he doth for us and towards our salvation ; and to inform us what are those respects and honours which we are bound to pay to each of the Sacred Three according to the New Testament. 6. It must be such a doctrine *as is obvious in Scripture and evidently contained there* ; if not in the most express words, yet so plainly appearing to common readers, as not to want long trains of reasoning and distant inferences to draw it out of Scripture.

In the next section the Divine Unity is assumed as unquestionable ; and in the third, it is taken for granted, that “ the doctrine of the blessed Trinity is a special doctrine of the Christian religion.” The object, then, is, to show, that this new doctrine of Christianity has “ made no inroad” upon the ancient doctrine of the Unity. This is done by inquiring whether the sacred three be *three proper persons*.

“ Those writers who call the Sacred Three by the name of *three persons*, do not assert or maintain that this very word or expression of *three persons* is found in Scripture, nor is the word *person* expressly applied to them all three.

“ And though in our translation the word *person* be ascribed both to the *Father* and the *Son*, who (as we find in Scripture) are proper persons, yet none pretend that this word is so expressly applied to the *Holy Spirit*, though he be represented often in a personal manner.” p. 19.

“ And this is certain further, that our most orthodox divines, though they sometimes call them *proper and real persons*, yet they do not pretend to use the word *person*, in this scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, in the very same entire and complete sense as when we say, Peter, Paul and John, are three persons. A distinct person, in the full and proper sense of the word among men, must be a distinct spirit ; for a distinct person requires at least another distinct consciousness, with another distinct will, which seems to infer another different spirit. And surely the Deity is not made up of three such distinct and different spirits.

“ Besides, it is sufficiently evident, that in the language of Scripture, and in the writings of the Jewish nation, those things which are not strictly and properly *persons*, are often represented in a personal manner, as *Wisdom*, Prov. ix. 1. *The Law*, Gal. iv. 21. *The Scriptures*, Gal. iii. 8. *Righteousness*, Rom. x. 6. *Love or Charity*, 1 Cor. xiii. And therefore the *Sacred Three* may be called three persons, or at least *Three Scriptural Persons*, I hope, without offence, and without entering into the tedious, learned and philosophical difficulties about the word *person* : and without enquiring or determining whether they be three real proper persons, or no ; which has created infinite disputes, and which cannot be understood, much less decided, by private Christians.” p. 20.

It is clear from this passage, that Dr. Watts considered the "Sacred Three," not as *real*, but only as "*scriptural persons*:" that is, according to his own explanation in the paragraph last quoted, *figurative persons*. That is to say, the doctrine of the trinity is a figurative mode of speaking. Take away the figure, and it is nothing else than Unitarianism.

The inquiry concerning Jesus Christ, in the fifth section, is premised with the following remarkable declaration: "there is not one text which I know of, in all the Bible, wherein he is called the *Son*, only and purely relating to his Godhead, but all refer rather to his inferior nature, or his office; for Godhead cannot be generated or derived." Accordingly he does not hold by any means the sound doctrine, that Jesus is God because the *second person* in the Godhead, *the Son*, is united to the man; but because "*the Father dwelleth in him*." "This second person, this man Christ Jesus has the true Godhead united to him, or dwelling in him, in a peculiar manner; *i. e.* the man Jesus Christ is assumed by the great God into so near and intimate an union with himself, that they are often represented as one complex person, or personal agent. The man Jesus Christ is the inferior agent or medium of the great God, who acteth whatsoever he pleases in and by the man Jesus Christ." p. 24.

Here, the man Christ Jesus, and the second person, are synonymous terms. The second person is formed by the union of the Father with a human being. This certainly is not the doctrine of the Trinity, for it allows no distinction of any kind in the Godhead, which is essential to that doctrine. Indeed we do not perceive that it really differs from the simplest form of Unitarianism.

His opinions respecting the Holy Spirit are quite as distant from real orthodoxy. Indeed his section on this topic is a set argument *against* the *personality* of the Holy Spirit; that is, if there be meaning in language, against the doctrine of the Trinity. We refer our readers, without saying a word more, to the following passages.

"The best idea that we can find, which either the ancient or modern Jews have received concerning the Spirit of God, is that of a real, almighty, operative power or principle of knowledge or action in the true Godhead; for I do not find they ever agreed to carry their ideas so far as to make him a real, distinct person in the Deity.

"Now we can hardly doubt but that the general notion of the Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit, when Christ first came on earth, and which inspired Zechary and Elizabeth, Mary the mother of Christ, Simeon and Anna, and John the Baptist, Luke 1st and 2nd chap. in the beginning of the New Testament, was the same notion or idea of the Spirit, which the Jews had received from all ages by their Scriptures, and from their fathers by education and tradition.

“ And 'tis most highly reasonable to believe, that our blessed Lord, who is *truth* itself, used those words of the Old Testament in the same sense in which the Jews of that day used them without reproof or blame ; and that he would not impose upon them, nor on his disciples, by putting new and unknown ideas upon common and well-known words, or names, in their conversation with him.

“ In order to find what is the true scriptural idea of the Holy Spirit, let it be added also, that as the Scripture makes use of the analogy or resemblance between human and divine things, to represent the Son of God to us, so does it also in representing the Spirit of God.

“ Now the spirit of any thing amongst the Jews, and other Eastern nations, was the perceptive and active power or principle of that being. So the spirit of a man is the principle of knowledge and operation in man ; so the spirit of a beast is the same ; and the apostle Paul confirms this opinion, and establishes this analogy between things human and divine. 1 Cor. ii. 11, ‘ What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him ? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.’

“ The Spirit of God therefore, according to this analogy, must be that all-wise, almighty, and eternal principle of consciousness and of powerful operation which is in the Godhead.” p. 27, 28.

“ It may be intimated here also, that the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, when it speaks of things after the Ascension of Christ, very generally or for the most part means, that power or influence of the eternal Spirit of God, which *proceedeth from the Father*, and which was communicated, or to be communicated by Christ, when he was exalted, to his followers here on earth, to confirm his gospel and to call in and secure his subjects : or it may be described thus ; That divine influence which was eminently given to Christ at his ascent to heaven, to attend his gospel and bear witness to it by miracles in the first age, and by sanctifying grace and comfort ever since. 'Tis very useful to bear this idea always in mind in reading the New Testament.

“ And indeed if the Holy Spirit were really a true and proper person, it would be as difficult to account for all these and many more expressions in Scripture, which cannot possibly be ascribed to a proper person ; and if in some places these *impersonal expressions*, or in other places the *personal expressions*, must be figurative, why may not my explication of them do as well as the contrary ? And thus the Spirit of God need NOT ANY WHERE BE CONSTRUED INTO A REAL PROPER DISTINCT PERSON.” p. 30.

“ Yet let it be remembered (as is said before) that even in some of these impersonal senses it may be sometimes represented as performing personal actions, according to the Hebrew idiom ; as Wisdom, the Law, the Scripture, Righteousness, Sin, Death, and many other things are described as persons. So the anointing teacheth us all things, 1 John, ii. 27. ‘ The Spirit lusteth against the flesh,’ Gal. v. 17. i. e. the new nature wrought by the Spirit.” p. 31.

“ But I know not any place of Scripture which requires us to make express personal addresses, either of prayer or of praise, unto the Spirit, as we are taught to do to the Father and to the Son ; nor can I find where we are required to fear him or to adore him as God, or to trust in him, or so much as to follow after the knowledge of him ; but for these benefits which we receive from him, we are directed by precepts or examples in Scripture to address or pray to the Father or the son, Luke, xi. 13, Rom. xv. 13, John xv. 26, but not to the Spirit himself.

“ Surely if praises or prayers were necessary to be offered distinctly to the Holy Spirit, 'tis very strange that of all the writers of the New Testament, not one of them should give us some hint of it in precept, instruction, or example ; but neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John, Paul, nor Peter, James, nor Jude, have left us any thing whence we can infer it.

“ 'Tis true I cannot think it unlawful nor utterly improper upon some occasions to say, Blessed Spirit of God, enlighten me in the knowledge of the truth : or, we give thanks to thee, O Divine Spirit, for thy holy influences ; for since the Holy Spirit is true God, I think he may be adored ; we may say, Blessed be God and his Spirit ; as we may say, Blessed be God and his wisdom, or his power, or his grace. But I think the two plainest reasons why we are not directed to address express prayer or praise unto him, or perform divine honour to him directly, is *first*, because the greater part of Scriptures which speak of the Spirit of God mean his influences, his operations, &c. And these are not proper objects of such express addresses. And *secondly*, because whensoever the Father or the Son is addrest, the Holy Spirit, who is the conscious and active power, or Spirit of God, is also worshipped, though not in an express and distinct manner.

“ It may be observed also, that though our Lord Jesus Christ is sometimes addrest by prayer in Scripture, because he is true God, yet 'tis but very seldom this is done, that so the general method of Christian worship may be maintained ; that is, to make our direct addresses to God the Father by the mediation of Jesus Christ his Son, and by the aids of the Holy Spirit, Ephes. ii. 18.” p. 32, 33.

All this we conceive to be most obviously and unequivocally opposed to all correct faith in the orthodox trinity. His mode of answering “ objections about these representations of the Holy Spirit,” is a still further proof of this.

“ There are many Christians indeed, who cannot suppose that several texts of Scripture can be explained by the Spirit of God, considered as an essential power or principle in the Godhead, because the Spirit of God is always represented as ministering to God the Father, or to Jesus Christ, as sent by both the Father and the Son, on all his messages, and seems to be distinguished from them as another person in the Form of Baptism, and in 1 John v. 7, where Three bear record in heaven, and in other Scriptures.

“ But we must remember, that not only the Hebrew tongue, but almost all languages represent many things in a personal manner, which are not real persons : such as Life, Death, Virtue, Time, Fate, Nature, Providence, Conscience, Appetite, &c. And we may say, God and his Spirit, as well as we may say God and his Providence, God and nature, do this or that.

“ 'Tis objected also, that the Spirit of God is sometimes represented in a lower character, as a mere messenger, John xvi. 13, ‘ When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth ; he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak.’ &c.

“ But we should consider, that though the Spirit of God itself, or the divine principle of knowledge and power in Godhead, cannot be so properly represented in a lower character, yet the influences and operations, the gifts or effects, of the Spirit of God, which are often called the Spirit, may be said to be sent, conveyed, or bestowed upon men ; and that even not only by God the Father, or by Jesus Christ, but also by the hands of the apostles. Peter and John laid their hands on the Samaritans, and they received the Holy Spirit, Acts viii. 17.” p. 35.

Such are the contents of this pamphlet. We apprehend that the sentiments advanced and defended in it, do not materially, if at all, differ from those which he had publicly given to the world before his death, and which are generally attributed to him under the title of “ the indwelling scheme.” But though there should perchance be found any shades of difference, we are certain that they are very small ; and that his former writings, as well as this posthumous pamphlet, afford no sufficient pretence for classing him amongst trinitarians. He indeed loved and used their phraseology ; he had been educated in it, there were holy associations with it in his mind, and he could not bear to give it up. But no one can glance an eye over the passages we have quoted above, without being convinced beyond question, that he affixed to it a signification altogether foreign from its obvious meaning, and totally irreconcilable to it. In words he confessed it, but his heart was far from it.

It may be thought, perhaps, a matter of small consequence what the opinions were of Dr. Watts, or of any man who lived a century ago ; and that it is scarcely worth while to enter into an inquiry concerning them. In regard to most men it would be so. But in regard to a man universally known, respected and appealed to ; upon whom the majority of Christians look as the standard of faith, and whose poetical writings exert an influence over the minds and hearts of believers, great beyond all calculation ; we esteem it right and proper to step in and see whether there be any mistake or not. We hold that it is improper and unjust

to regard him as the champion of a faith, which, in his ripest and latest years, he did not maintain ; and it is time that we should cease to propagate, under cover of his early writings, and beneath the sanction of his venerated name, a sentiment, which he has, with great solemnity, virtually disavowed.

But enough of this. There is another thought suggested by the work before us, to which for one moment we must beg the attention of our readers.

Nothing can be plainer than what is taught us from this example of Watts, and others similar to it ; that the doctrine of the Trinity is a matter of words and phraseology alone. The contention is not, on the part of its advocates, so much for a certain opinion, as for a certain form of language. He that adheres to this language, is accounted to be sound in the faith ; he that abandons this language, has departed from the faith. This is no random assertion, but a plain and demonstrable matter of fact ; and it constitutes, in our view, one of the most deplorable features of the system. It is well known, that there is as little community of belief amongst those who contend for this creed, as between almost any classes of believers. The variety of interpretations given to these words, is almost endless. And yet every one who takes the words, in whatever sense, is considered and treated as a true believer ; while every one who rejects these words, is, for that simple and single reason, considered and treated as a heretic. Dr. Watts was able to abide by the language in which he had been educated, and has been suffered quietly to retain his reputation and influence ; while many others, not perhaps differing at all in sentiment from him, have yet been branded with obloquy, because they departed from the prescribed mode of speech. Such is trinitarianism : it is built upon, it consists in, words ; and every man who will repeat the words, construe them as he may, is sound in this article of faith.

This appears to us a most important view of the subject ; for if it be thus—as every man of reading and observation must know that it is—it is an unsettled, loose, indefinite system, pretending to great exactness and precision, yet neglecting the sense in an unworthy adherence to words ; and therefore we are fully justified in opposing all attempts to force it upon us and our fellow christians, and in repelling the imputations cast upon the character of those, who care more for the sentiment of their creed, than for the language in which it is stated.—Nay, we must be permitted to say, that we think the whole history of man does not afford a more lamentable instance of weakness, to say no-

thing harsher, than the pains which have been taken to overwhelm with suspicion and obloquy, all who cannot assent to the prescribed form of words ; while at the same time, confidence and reputation are permitted to follow those who do, even when they accompany them with an heretical interpretation. The excellent Watts himself, if his strong attachment to old forms had suffered him to depart from the language as well as the sentiment in which he was educated, would have been proscribed in the church and his name blackened ; but as he only departed from the sentiment, he has been still permitted to wear his honours.

The truth of all this might be abundantly established by appeal to facts. We are glad to have had an opportunity to support it by the example of so eminent a man, who needed only to have lived a few years longer or half a century later, to have found that this embarrassing doctrine was not a first principle of revelation, and therefore, that its peculiar phraseology might be safely departed from, as well as its signification explained away.

ARTICLE XIX.

1. *Advice to the Teens ; or Practical Helps towards the formation of one's own character.*
2. *Self-Cultivation recommended ; or, Hints to a Youth leaving School.*
3. *Character essential to Success in Life : Addressed to those who are approaching Manhood.* By ISAAC TAYLOR, Minister of the Gospel at Ongar. Boston, published by Wells & Lilly. 1820.

THE name of Taylor, although it does not stand so high as some others in the same department, is yet one which should be mentioned with great respect and gratitude, for judicious and well meant endeavours to promote in the young a love of knowledge and of virtue. Several members of the family are authors, and have written for the improvement of the young ; and in this age, which has been so much distinguished for attention to the subject of education, their works have a claim to be ranked among the most useful and sensible. The wife of our author has attempted to impress and instruct through the medium of fictitious narrative, and published that pleasant and good tale, *Duty, or the White Cottage*. In the same line his daughter gave to the world *Display, a tale for young people*—one of the most unexceptionable and useful religious stories. Mrs. Taylor is also the author of *Practical Hints to young females, on the duties of Wife,*

and *Mother*, which has had an extensive circulation amongst us, and with whose merits many of our readers are acquainted. The father of the family is now, we understand, an aged minister at Ongar in England, who devotes the leisure of his old age to the amusement of engraving, and of writing books for the instruction of the young. These books have been republished here, and deserved to be republished. It is gratifying to learn that their merit has been appreciated by the public, and that they are taken into quick circulation. They are full of the finest thoughts and best sentiments, rich in the counsels of experience, inspired with the wisdom of religion, and, notwithstanding their infelicity of style, by which they may possibly be rendered less attractive than they otherwise might be, must be considered as a valuable gift to those who are just entering life. They form together part of a system, each being in a manner the continuation of the preceding. And that young person who shall consent to adopt the principles and obey the maxims here laid down, shall study and follow the counsels here given, will lay for himself a sure foundation of respectability, honour, virtue, and happiness, and—if faithful unto death—a crown of life.

INTELLIGENCE.

Massachusetts Peace Society.—The annual choice of the officers of this Institution took place on the 12th of December. His Hon. William Phillips was rechosen President; Hon. Thomas Dawes, V. President; Rev. Dr. Harris, Rec. Secretary; Rev. Dr. N. Worcester, Corresponding Sec.; and Rev. Dr. Foster, Assistant Cor. Sec.; and Elisha Ticknor, Esq. Treasurer.—The anniversary services of the society were celebrated in the Old South Church, on the evening of Dec. 25th, the birthday of the PRINCE OF PEACE, in presence of a crowded and gratified assembly. After prayers by the Rev. Mr. Sharp, an oration was delivered by the Hon. Josiah Quincy, on the objects and prospects of the society, in which he illustrated in a strain of argumentative and impassioned eloquence rarely excelled, the various circumstances in the history and progress of the world, which give encouragement to the friends of peace to believe that they shall not labour in vain. We would give a sketch of his reasoning and illustrations, if we did not suppose that the oration would be soon published. A collection was taken to assist in defraying the expenses of the society. The services were interspersed with anthems sung in a superior style of performance, and the assembly departed highly animated and gratified. We present the following extracts from

The Fifth Annual Report.—In the course of the year there have been distributed, in behalf of the Society and its Auxiliaries:—

New Series—vol. II.

Of the various Nos. of the Friend of Peace,	7155
Of the several smaller Tracts,	8935

In all,	16080
In addition to these, there have been sold of the Friend of Peace,	2860
Increasing the aggregate disposed of, to	18,940

It is also proper to state, that two valuable Addresses have been published by Branch Societies—one by Hingham Branch, delivered by the Rev. Daniel Kimball; the other by East Haddam Branch, delivered by the Rev. Solomon Blacklee.

In making the distributions, the Committee have sent upwards of 500 copies of the Friend of Peace, and many smaller Tracts, to foreign states and countries;—to the four British provinces in America—to Great Britain, France, Germany, and Russia, in Europe, and to Calcutta and Ceylon, in Asia. The other distributions have extended to the greater number of the United States.

In regard to the influence of these Tracts, and the manner in which they have been received, it may be sufficient to give an extract from a recent Report of the Raleigh Peace Society, in which it is said—"All who had an opportunity of reading them, seemed to feel the importance of the subject. None, we venture to say, have attempted a refutation of the doctrines or principles therein contained. Aged ministers of the gospel expressed their astonishment and regret, that they had never before viewed the matter in its true light. Others declared that they had often been impressed with such sentiments, but so indistinct, and so various from sentiments that are generally deemed patriotic, that they never ventured to express them."

Of this extract the committee will only observe, that similar effects have occurred in many other parts of the country;—and that these being duly multiplied and extended, cannot fail to excite a universal abhorrence of war.

Since our last Anniversary three new Auxiliaries have been reported—Byfield, Boxford, and Andover—and a report of one at Sacket's Harbour, is daily expected.* The East Haddam and Billerica Branches, have been greatly enlarged; other Branches have received some additions, and many members have been added to the original Society. In all societies, the individuals are liable to pecuniary embarrassments, and to death. It is not possible for the Committee to state the precise number of members at the present time; but, including the fifteen Auxiliaries, it is supposed that the present number of members exceeds one thousand.

Two of the early members of this society have in the course of the year become Life Subscribers—Jonathan Thompson, Esq. of Natchez, in Mississippi, has also presented a Life Subscription; and J. N. Mooyart, Esq. of Ceylon, in India, has presented a donation of twenty dollars, in addition to his former donation of twenty-five. The value of Mr. Mooyart's donation in Tracts, was delivered to the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to be forwarded to India, that the cause of the Society might be promoted in that quarter of the world. The Reports which have been received from the independent Societies in this country, afford evidence that the cause of peace is advancing in Maine, Rhode Island, New-York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Indiana.

* An Association has also been formed at Stanstead, (L. C.) on the plan proposed for Reading Peace Societies; and Tracts have been procured for the same purpose by a gentleman of Shirley in this state.

The Committee have received no accounts from the Societies in Britain, of later date than the *Herald of Peace*, for March, 1820. At that period, the principal Society in London, had been greatly strengthened by the addition of many subscribers, and several important Auxiliary Societies. Besides having published more than 150,000 Tracts in their own language, they had caused 5000 copies of the *Solemn Review* to be published in Germany; 5000 copies of another Tract in the Dutch language, were in the press, for Holland and its colonies; arrangements were making for publishing in the Welsh language; and one hundred pounds sterling had been granted to promote the objects of the Society in France. These facts may dispel all fears that the Peace Societies in this country are too rapid in their advances for the public safety.

Since the Society was formed, it has increased in a ratio greater than that of doubling its number annually. Were it to advance in the same ratio for ten years to come, it would contain more members than there were free adults in the United States during the time of the revolution. Though such advances in future are not to be expected, it is reasonable to anticipate an increase of Peace Societies, and Peace characters, both in this country and in Great Britain, which will have a favourable influence on the policy of the two nations, and on the destinies of the world.

Landing of the Fathers.—The TWO HUNDREDTH anniversary since the landing of the fathers of New-England, occurred on the 22d day of Dec. The day was celebrated by religious services in many churches throughout the country, and by the sons of New-England in distant cities. At Plymouth there was a great and glad festival. The town was crowded with visitors from every part of the land, and the day spent in the most animated expressions of gratitude and joy. Religious services were performed in the meeting house, and an impressive and powerful oration delivered by the Hon. Daniel Webster. "The feelings excited in the minds of all, by the combined solemnities and rejoicings of the occasion, were those of enthusiasm for the character of our fathers, veneration for their exalted virtues, tender recollection of their trials and hardships, and heartfelt gratitude to Divine Providence for his goodness to them and their children."

In New-York, this festival was celebrated by the *New England Society*, at whose request the Rev. Dr. Spring delivered a Sermon; in which he took occasion to give account of the state of religion and morality in Boston. He said, "in many of the churches in Massachusetts, and particularly in the metropolis of New-England, the glory of the gospel had departed, a religion laid on other foundations than the bible had taken place of the sound and pure faith of their forefathers: The Sabbath was profaned, family religion almost entirely neglected, and vice and immorality prevailed,"—and not content with this, to make it still more pointed, he went on to ask, "What would have been the condition of New England now, if the Pilgrims, instead of being pious *Christians*, had been Infidels, or Jews, or Catholics, or Arians, or Socinians?" These have been given to us by a correspondent, as the words of the preacher, as nearly as can be recollected.

We have been so accustomed to hearing language of this sort, that it occasions no surprise. It is no novelty to be excluded the company of 'pious christians,' and to be classed with 'Jews and Infidels.' But we should hardly have expected that a reverend divine would have chosen the opportunity of so solemn and joyful a festival, to wound the feelings and insult the faith of a large number of the members of that society at whose request he was speaking, especially that he could hope to be believed in intimating what he knew to be untrue, that vice and immorality are more prevalent in this than in more orthodox cities.

Religion in Otaheite.—We copy from the London Evangelical Magazine, the following interesting particulars, respecting the progress of Christianity in this Island. They are extracted from a letter of the missionaries.

“The king Pomare has lately erected a large and very long building at Papaoa, in the district of Pare, and devoted it to the meetings of the missionary society, which was formed among the Tahitians last year. This building we denominate The Royal Mission Chapel, the dimensions of which are as follows; it is 712 feet long by 54 wide. The ridge pole, or middle, is supported by 36 massy pillars of the bread-fruit tree. The outside posts all around the house are 280. It has 133 windows with sliding shutters, and 29 doors; the ends are of a semi-circular form. There are three square pulpits, about 260 feet apart from each other, and the extreme ones about 100 feet from the ends of the house. It is filled with forms, except an area before each pulpit, and laid with dry grass. The rafters are covered with a fine kind of fringed matting, which is bound on with cords of various colours in a very neat manner; and the ends of the matting are left hanging down, like the naval and military flags in St. Paul’s Cathedral. The whole building is surrounded with a very strong fence of wood, and the space between it and the building is filled with gravel.

“Pomare has lately expressed an earnest desire for baptism, engaging to devote himself to the Lord, and to put away every sin, and every appearance of evil. He has had conferences with some of the brethren on the subject; and has also written to us expressing a deep sense of his sinfulness and unworthiness, a firm dependence upon the blood of Christ for pardon, and an earnest desire to give himself to the Lord in baptism. As it appeared to be the voice of the nation, and particularly of the most pious chiefs, and as his conduct has been so constant in teaching and promoting religion, we resolved to baptize him. The baptism was fixed for Lord’s Day, 16th inst.

“Tuesday was the day appointed for opening the Royal Mission Chapel. —About 11 o’clock we met the king at the east end of the house. He was dressed in a white shirt, with a neat variegated mat around his loins, and a tiputa over all, coloured and ornamented with red and yellow. The Queen and principal women were dressed in native clothing, with an English frill around the neck. The assembled thousands were clean, and dressed in their best. We took our station according to appointment. Brother Platt in the west pulpit, brother Darling in the middle, and brother Crook in the east. The king sat in the east end of the house. Brother Bourne, from the middle pulpit commenced the service, by giving out Hymn the third, in our Tahitian collection, with a very shrill penetrating voice, which was heard from one end of the house to the other. The whole congregation stood up and sung. Each preacher then read Luke xiv. and prayed. The sermons commenced about the same time, brother Darling’s text was Isa. lvi. 7. *I will make them joyful in my house of prayer; &c.* brother Platt’s text, Luke xiv. 22. *And yet there is room; and brother Crook’s, Exod. xx. 24. In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.* The sermons being ended much about the same time, all the congregation sung again, and the whole was concluded with prayer. The scene was striking beyond description; no confusion ensued from three speakers preaching all at once in the same house, they being at such a great distance from each other.

“Thursday was the day appointed for promulgating the laws. About noon we all assembled in the centre of the Royal Mission Chapel. The king requested brother Crook to open the business of the day. He as-

ended the pulpit, and Pomare followed. After singing, reading the scriptures, and prayer, the king stood up, and looked upon the thousands of his subjects on his right hand and his left. Addressing himself to Tati, the pious chief of the southern part of the Island, he said, 'Tati, what is your desire? what can I do for you?' Tati, who sat nearly opposite the pulpit, arose and said, 'Those are what we want—the papers you hold in your hand—the laws; give them to us, that we may have them in our hands, that we may regard them, and do what is right.' The king then addressed himself to Utami, the good chief of the Teoropaa, and in an affectionate manner, said, 'Utami, and what is your desire?' He replied, 'One thing only is desired by us all, that which Tati has expressed—the laws, which you hold in your hand.' The king then addressed Arahū, the chief of Eimeo, and Veve, the chief of Taiarabu, nearly in the same manner, and they replied as the others had done. Pomare then proceeded to read and comment upon the laws respecting murder, theft, trespass, stolen property, lost property, sabbath breaking, rebellion, marriage, adultery, the judges, court houses, &c. in eighteen articles. After reading and explaining the several articles, he asked the chiefs if they approved of them? They replied aloud, 'We agree to them—we heartily agree to them.' The king then addressed the people, and desired them, if they approved of the laws, to signify the same by lifting up their right hands. This was unanimously done, with a remarkable rushing noise, owing to the thousands of arms being lifted at once. When Pomare came to the article on rebellion, stirring up war, &c. he seemed inclined to pass it over, but after a while proceeded. At the conclusion of that article, Tati was not contented with signifying his approbation in the usual way only, but standing up, he called in a spirited manner, to all his people to lift up their hands again, even both hands, he setting the example, which was universally followed. Thus all the articles were passed and approved. Brother Henry concluded the meeting with a short address, prayer and blessing. This interesting scene may be better conceived than described; to see a king giving laws to his people with a regard to the authority of the word of God, and the people receiving the same with such universal satisfaction, was a subject very affecting to us all."

ORDINATION.—On Tuesday, Nov. 14, Mr. John Brazer, late Professor of Latin, in Harvard College, was ordained to the pastoral care of the North Church in Salem. Introductory Prayer, by Rev. J. Bartlett of Marblehead; Sermon, by the Rev. President Kirkland, from 2 Thessalonians, ii. 11, 12. Ordaining Prayer by Rev. Mr. Abbot of Beverly; Charge by Rev. Dr. Bancroft of Worcester; Fellowship of the Churches, by Rev. Dr. Prince of Salem; Concluding Prayer, by Rev. Mr. Ware of Boston.

The Clergyman's Almanack.—We recommend this Almanack to the patronage of our readers. Its editor has laboured for many years to make it worthy the attention of religious families, and we think he deserves encouragement from all religious people; especially since pains have been taken to prejudice the public against it, and prevent its circulation.

OBITUARY.

Died, on Sunday morning, Dec. 24, after a short, but severe illness, JOHN GALLISON, Esq. Counsellor at Law, aged 32.

In the death of this most estimable man, not only his friends and professional associates, but the whole community have sustained a severe loss. His character, wherever it could be known, inspired respect, and within the circle of friendship, the tenderest affection. We perhaps should not claim for him the highest attributes of genius, or any unusual vigour or originality of intellect, but he possessed what is generally more valuable—excellent talents, faithfully improved, a sound judgment, inviolable rectitude, scrupulous adherence to duty, singleness of purpose, kind and unobtrusive manners, and a most benevolent heart. Those, who were conversant with him in the walks of his profession, bear testimony to the extent and accuracy of his learning, to his patient, laborious investigation, to his conscientious fulfilment of every trust, to the honourable principles, by which he was actuated; and in the evidence he was daily giving of his industry, his fidelity and skill, they were already anticipating for him the highest rank and honours of his profession. Indeed the character and talents of Mr. Gallison were precisely such, as in our community create the highest confidence. There was in him an unusual freedom from prejudice and passion, mingled with unaffected modesty. He never claimed what would not be cordially yielded to him, and he generously granted to all their due.

We might speak of his public spirit; the interest he expressed for all that concerns our literary and political improvement. But it is chiefly to the religious character of our lamented friend that we would invite attention. He was in its most exalted sense, *a good man*. Purity of thought and principle, a deep sense of moral obligation, a devout reverence of religion, and a sincere humble piety, were conspicuous in him; and much as we honour his talents and professional attainments, we do not hesitate to say, that it was his *goodness*, which gave him his noblest distinction. We saw in him, what power there is in virtue to improve and exalt the intellect, and to make learning a blessing. He had given to the subjects of christianity an attentive investigation; and the result was a firm conviction of its truth. He embraced the gospel of his Saviour in its simplicity, convinced of its spiritual, practical nature, and utterly disclaiming all authority or impositions of man. He exhibited the fruits of religion in his exact discharge of its duties, in his pure, humble, and benevolent life. He was particularly a punctual attendant on public worship, expressing a lively interest in the prosperity of the religious society,* of which he was a most valuable member; and was frequently found, during the intermission of the Lord's day, instructing the young children of the school, in the simple truths and duties of religion. And though nothing was farther from his taste and feelings than ostentation, it might be seen in his professional labours, and in his most familiar intercourse, that he was habitually guided by the holiest motives.

In his death, sudden, untimely, as it seems, God has taught us once more the utter uncertainty of the fairest and the purest earthly hopes. For ourselves, we could have wished he might have been spared, for in such a life we see the path to glory and to virtue. He was one whom the aged and the young could alike applaud; whom none could envy, because religion sanctified all his success; and whom all can imitate, because virtue was his brightest glory. He has bequeathed to us the light and encouragement of his example; and may the God, who has thus early crowned him with immortality, help us, who remain, to be followers of him as he was a follower of Christ.

* Rev. Dr. Channing's in Federal Street.

¶ For notice to Correspondents, see second page of the cover.

